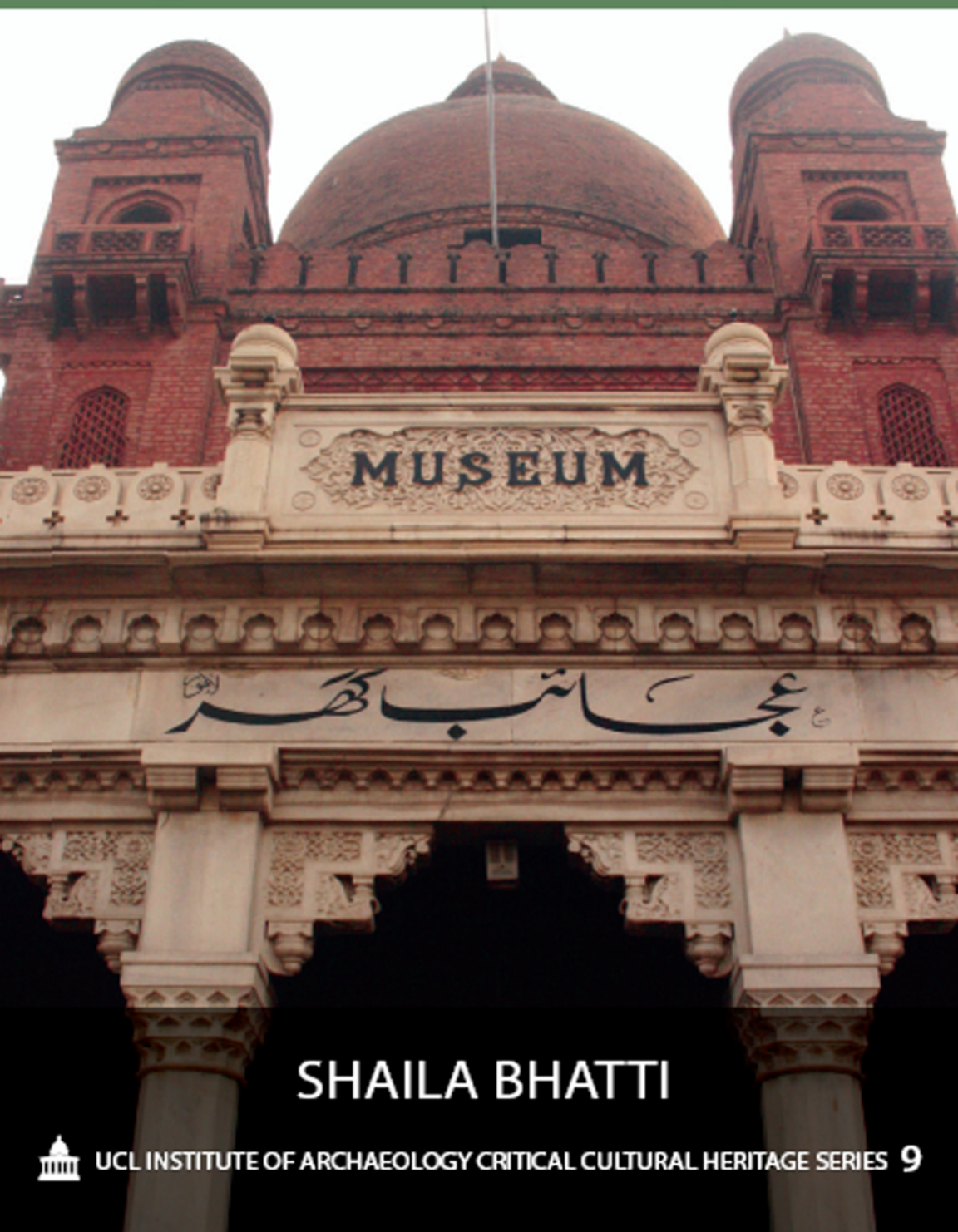


TRANSLATING MUSEUMS

A COUNTERHISTORY OF SOUTH ASIAN MUSEOLOGY



SHAILA BHATTI



UCL INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY CRITICAL CULTURAL HERITAGE SERIES 9

TRANSLATING MUSEUMS

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TRANSLATING MUSEUMS

A Counterhistory of South Asian Museology



Shaila Bhatti

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For my abu—Mushtaq Ali Bhatti (1942–2005)—you left me too soon,
but your memories will always remain with me. And with love to
ammi—Nasim Akhtar Bhatti, and brother Tariq

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NOTE ON TRANSLATION AND TRANSLITERATION



In translating Urdu and Punjabi words used in conversation and interviews, I have deliberately left out the use of diacritical marks and so risk offending linguists. However, my main concern was to give greater accessibility to the reader. As far as transliteration of names goes, I have left intact Sanskrit and Persian words, as well as colonial spelling of names, should an institution or official document use/quote them as such to reflect the nomenclature used.

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ABBREVIATIONS



AIML	All India Muslim League
JIAI	Journal of Indian Art and Industry
LML	Lahore Museum Library
MSA	Mayo School of Art
NCA	National College of Arts
NCAA	National College of Arts Archives
OIOC	Oriental and India Office Collections
PSA	Punjab Secretariat Archives
PSL	Punjab Secretariat Library

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Shaila Bhatti
February 2012

PROLOGUE



The general aspect of the city from without, excepting on its northern front, is not very imposing, nor does its irregularity give it a perfect claim to picturesque beauty. The Hindu temples are small and poor in outline, and neither they nor the cupolas of the mosques sufficiently break the monotonous horizontal lines which are the chief features of the view. But on the east, four minarets inlaid with coloured porcelain work strike the eye, and on its northern aspect—where the Mosque of Aurangzeb, with its large bulb-like domes of white marble and colossal minarets of red sandstone, the Mausoleum of Ranjit Singh, with its curvilinear roof and details half Muhammadan half Hindu, and lastly, the once brilliantly enamelled front of the palace of the Mughals stand side by side overlooking a broad and grass plain—Lahore can even now show an architectural *coup d'oeil* worthy of an imperial city. Within the city walls the streets are narrow and winding, but some of them, from the overhanging balconies of wood curiously carved and coloured, the striped awnings over the shop—fronts, and the gay costumes of the population, are highly picturesque; which the streamers of bright coloured cloths hung at intervals across from balcony to balcony prove that the wondrous dyes of Kathaea, which moved the warriors of Alexander to admiration, are not altogether things of the past.¹

LAHORE

Lahore city today is punctured by a few more architectural splendours, some permanent, others temporary, but all adding to the composite nature of the city. Approaching Lahore on the Grand Trunk Road, which passes through the city, one notices that the physical inscription

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of history is still visible amid the urban sprawl: Mughal architecture, hints of temple structures peeking out, Minar-i-Pakistan (site of the 1940 Lahore Resolution), and, as the Grand Trunk Road veers off to the left, the Fort, Ranjit Singh's Mausoleum, and Badshahi Mosque, built by Emperor Aurangzeb. The city invites you, entices the gaze, and makes you notice its interposed textures and perspectives just as it had Alexander's warriors and later J. L. Kipling and T. H. Thornton, leading them to describe its aesthetic and architectural heritage in the preceding quote. Carrying on south, you see the northern edge of the old city—claustrophobic, vertically ascending, colourful, and sensual—visible from Ravi Road, which runs parallel to this part of the Walled City. As you continue, the bustle of people intensifies around the junction (*chownk*) near Data Darbar (the shrine of Lahore's saint). After this, Lahore begins to change. Roads are planned and modern, as are the spaces and vistas that open up with a different style of architecture dominated by grand red-brick buildings: the cathedral-like Government College, University; Punjab University; the Town Hall; and at the beginning of the Mall Road (Shahrah-e-Quaid-e-Azam) sits the Zam-Zammah canon, which Rudyard Kipling's (1912) *Kim* confidently straddled, claiming his colonial inheritance. These bastions of colonial, and now postcolonial, government and education are accompanied by another red-brick building that presents a profusion of domes, small balconies, exquisite red sandstone latticework, and a brilliantly carved marble façade that makes it worthy of any capital city; a sign tells us that this is the Lahore Museum, yet the marble inlay in Urdu also claims it to be the *Ajaib Ghar* ('Wonder House,' illustrated in [Chapter 1](#)).

The large building with a single entrance and many windows ([illus. 1](#)) from the outside gives little away as to what lies inside, and on my first visit in 2000, having heard that surviving colonial museums in South Asia were usually dull, neglected, and hardly visited by the public, I was uncertain about what to expect. However, once over the threshold I was mildly surprised by what I saw: the museum was well maintained and had visitors, and as I walked around I became enchanted with this place, some of which made sense but most of which simply captivated me. The order and historical time line that comfort or bore visitors in Western museums did not exist, and so I was kept on my toes. Just as I came to grips with one display, the next would surprise me by presenting something completely different; these eclectic juxtapositions brought out a visceral response that is somehow deadened in a Western museum.

Enjoying my initial encounter with the Lahore Museum, I entered a gallery in which the guards sat huddled with their backs to the visitors. Interested to see what was happening, I made my way over. Glancing at other objects on the way, the closer I got to the guards the more I felt



1 Lahore Museum

a sense of tension around the one object being observed; oblivious to the presence of any visitors, the guards were engrossed in safeguarding this one exhibit. Eager to see what it was, I was surprised to find that it was a television set on which the guards were watching the Pakistani cricket team's live performance. How the television made its way into the gallery I have no clue, but then no one was alarmed by its presence, and even the visitors seemed to revel, with no sense of collision or disjuncture, in seeing cricket at the museum. It was as if the televisual image was just as important as any other displayed artefact, and, ironically, the guards, while protecting Pakistan's material cultural antiquity on display, were also protecting another facet of its intangible cultural heritage by actively watching the nation battle it out on the cricket pitch.

This memorable episode of my first visit to the Lahore Museum has stuck with me since and at the time led me to question what was actually going on—what did the museum mean in this context, who used this space, and how did they use or contest it and what sense did visitors make of the objects on display? I also wondered about how the collections come together and what the museum signified to those working there today and to their museum ancestors who formed it in the past. The Lahore Museum was not easy to classify: I was unclear whether this

place was memorialising the past, setting a precedent for the nation's future heritage, or meaning something completely different that referred to the label of *Ajaib Ghar*. At that moment, the institution of the *museum*, which to us in the West is recognisable, was becoming unfamiliar to me as I attempted to answer these questions, and in thinking about how the museum is perceived in South Asia I decided that this part of Lahore that quietly sits on the Mall Road was too tempting to ignore.

THE LAHORE MUSEUM: AJAIB GHAR

The Lahore Museum is Pakistan's oldest museum, dating back to 1856, when the original museum was set up by British colonists soon after annexing the Punjab in 1849. The need to establish a museum in the Punjab was part of a larger colonial drive to create a network of museums throughout colonial India and was spearheaded by the creation of a museum to house the Asiatic Society's collections in Calcutta, which eventually was converted into the Indian Museum ([Chapter 1](#)). This inauguration of the Asiatic Society's museum was accompanied by a myriad of other museum ventures that combined efforts initially of the East India Company, and later imperial authorities, with private individuals/bodies/Princely States to set up museums at provincial and district levels across British India. From the British perspective, this museum planning had a specific agenda in mind that was to benefit the colonist's progress in terms of knowledge acquisition and trade advancement. Museums in this respect were introduced in India to act as centres for collecting, depositing, organising, and displaying material knowledge of local culture and economic products—raw materials and manufacture, from which colonial officers could learn about India's history, society, and cultures but also assess its economic worth and potential. It was this desire to visualise and objectify India as a cultural and capital commodity that inspired the setting up of museums and collecting activities across the colony, supplemented by collection/curiosity donations from individual enthusiasts, travellers, and in due course elite Indians and princes. Colonial museums were to form a museum grid in the colony that would allow communication, knowledge exchange, and material duplicates between institutions in India and later the imperial centre—London.

Part of this museum expansion led to the birth of the Lahore Museum as the provincial museum for the Punjab in 1856. The museum developed in three distinct stages, each transforming the museum's agenda by reflecting government policy, personal ambitions of curators, or attempts to modernise and improve Indian museums. It was at Wazir Khan's *Baradari* (Mughal summerhouse, illustrated in [Chapter 1](#)) that the initial Lahore Museum was founded with a chiefly antiquarian focus

and displaying all manner of curiosities pertaining to the Punjab, with ethnographic and geological collections being formed and economic ones sought. A major museological requirement for the museum at this time was the implementation of a ‘professional’ ordering, classification, and displaying system for enquiring minds, and this requirement was eventually satisfied by importing the South Kensington Museum model to India. However, space soon became an issue, and the museum needed a new location, which became available following Punjab’s first industrial exhibition in 1864, when the old exhibition building (see the Epilogue) was allocated to the Lahore Museum for its second staging.

The Lahore Museum also benefited from the 1864 Punjab Exhibition in the form of new acquisitions that helped increase the volume and variety of collections. However, the museum still lacked direction and museum-minded curatorship, which was fulfilled only a decade later in 1875, when one of its esteemed curators, John Lockwood Kipling, father of Rudyard Kipling, arrived in Lahore. Responsible for both the Lahore Museum and the art school in Lahore, which was in its infancy at that time, J. L. Kipling was able to utilise both institutions in forwarding his interest in craft reformation and art education in India as informed by his training at the South Kensington Museum. During J. L. Kipling’s time, the Lahore Museum’s collections grew to include antiquities, archaeology, coins, natural history, and portraits but, most important, arts and manufactures, which were used directly in conjunction with the art school to instruct Indian craftsmen about traditional craft designs and techniques in order to rescue Indian crafts from the onslaught of modernisation and the debased forms of industrial goods being imported from Europe. Although the museum retained an encyclopaedic outlook in its collections, priority was given to craft reform driven by J. L. Kipling’s enthusiasm and belief in applying the ethos of the Arts and Crafts Movement to improve the potential for trade in Indian crafts, which was officially sanctioned by the government under Resolution 239 in 1884. Thus the Lahore Museum in the latter part of the nineteenth century was functioning as a sample/trade museum for crafts, and this situation was to have a lasting effect on the museum’s future; even today it is visible in the collections and categories of objects displayed. There is no doubt that J. L. Kipling had an indelible influence on the Lahore Museum, but so did his son—Rudyard Kipling—who popularised the enduring vernacular name for the museum within the Western imagination—the *Ajaib Ghar* (‘Wonder House’), in his fictional tale of *Kim* (1912).

Nearing the end of J. L. Kipling’s time in Lahore, space again became an issue, and so a larger permanent building was constructed for the museum’s third stage: the Jubilee Institute. In commemoration of Queen

Victoria's Jubilee in 1887, this structure was specifically built to house both the museum and the art school and was occupied in 1893; it remains the present location of the Lahore Museum. The museum continued to grow in terms of collections, but with the onset of the twentieth century, its aim turned toward providing an educational experience for the public, in particular for local visitors, and so emphasis was placed on adopting modern display strategies, classification, and labelling in English and the vernaculars.

This tripartite development saw the Lahore Museum transform from an institution set up during the East India Company's rule with the purpose of visualising material knowledge of Punjab to a provincial museum highlighting manufactures and industrial crafts directed by debates in art/craft education/reformation in England, especially through links with the South Kensington Museum. These debates made the museum an adjunct to the art school in Punjab, and it finally evolved into a public oriented modern museum that eventually involved elite Indians as curators (Chapter 1). However, with the end of colonial rule in 1947, the Punjab Province and its museum were subject to Partition, which meant division of cultural property between Independent India and the newly formed nation of Pakistan, to which the Lahore Museum now belonged: forty percent of the museum's collection migrated to India and ended up residing at the Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh (Chapter 2). With reduced collections, loss of curatorial staff/expertise, and new ideological imaginations, the Lahore Museum attempted, in the second half of the twentieth century, to recover, decolonise, and embrace a new image as a postcolonial museum of the Pakistani nation (Chapter 2).

Proud of this historical provenance, the Lahore Museum today employs its colonial heritage to promote itself as a cultural icon in terms of national patrimony. It not only believes itself to be Pakistan's premier cultural institution but also stakes out a regional and global positioning, and although officially the label 'national' is attributed to the National Museum of Pakistan in Karachi, few would contest the pseudo-national status of the Lahore Museum. This eminence is reflected in the fact that it is by far the most popular museum in Pakistan, which in 2003–2004 attracted on average over 27,000 visitors per month,² including foreign dignitaries, VIPs, and tourists, the majority of whom were domestic and local tourists from the Punjab and other provinces—usually Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These figures demonstrate active consumption of this cultural technology at a local level by the Pakistani public, who are attracted to the museum by the curiosities exhibited at the *Ajaib Ghar*. Although this enduring image of the museum as a 'wonder house' is popular among the public, it also remains a source of tension between

the museum and visitors in South Asia, since this image contests both institutional authority and desired identity based on the Eurocentric museum model (Chapter 4); however, the label of *ajajib* is also the crux to investigating other museum cultures (Chapter 5), as this book endeavours to do.

Currently, the Lahore Museum has twenty-two galleries spread out over two floors (Chapter 1); all are permanent, with minimal changes to the objects displayed, although from time to time temporary exhibitions do take place, and a cabinet displaying an ‘object of the month’ draws the public’s attention to the history of a specific object or group of objects. What is particularly noticeable about the Lahore Museum is the eclectic nature of its collections, which cover archaeology, art, craft, ethnography, political history, and religion and in part reflect and retain their colonial origins and classification. This quality denies the museum a singularised classification in terms of category or perspective but allows it to sustain an encyclopaedic outlook similar to modern museums while claiming to be a guardian of antiquity and ‘heritage,’ since it contains distinctive ‘masterpieces’ that belong to Pakistan—such as the Fasting Buddha (second century B.C.), which were reproduced in a lavish catalogue published jointly with UNESCO.³

This archaeologically inspired gloss helps the Lahore Museum to propagate a self-imagining that validates its role as both possessor of Pakistan’s cultural heritage rooted firmly in the land and custodian of a cultural resource fertile for identity formation by future generations. The labelling of its collections as ‘antiquities’ enables the Lahore Museum to look beyond national confines and situate itself comparatively as a legitimate and serious institution within the global museum network. This status is enhanced by the ownership of world-renowned collections such as Gandhara Art, whose select pieces often appear in such touring exhibitions as *The Art of Gandhara, Pakistan*, which travelled throughout Japan in 2002–2003 to commemorate fifty years of diplomatic relations between the two nations. Significantly, the Lahore Museum’s antiquities and masterpieces also include Hindu, Buddhist, Jaina, and Indus Valley Civilisation collections, and these are important for Pakistan as a salvaging heritage that can counter current attempts to purify and cleanse the nation’s heterogeneous past and cultural identity and replace them with a conservative Islamic ideology. In this respect, the Lahore Museum has the capacity to narrate a moderate Islamic nation that is culturally pluralistic, but so far this opportunity remains to be capitalised on by both the museum and cultural policy makers in Pakistan.

It is this history and development of the Lahore Museum, as an exemplar of a South Asian museum, to which I attend in this book by carrying out an ethnography of the museum that employs a methodology

combining investigation of objects/collections, institutional praxis, and visitor consumption—historicising and socialising all to produce the first ‘counterhistory’ (Pinney 2002b:359) of South Asian museums and museology.

COMPARATIVE MUSEOLOGIES

The Lahore Museum’s spectacular cornucopia of collections begun in the colonial era now inhabits the postcolonial nation of Pakistan. Transition and transformation aside, experience of this museum is such that even the most demure of museum-goers would be attracted by something. If museums are theatres where cultures are choreographed and ‘geographies of taste and values’ (Lumley 1988) mapped out for the public to appropriate variously as history, heritage, or art, in South Asia these cultural values are complimented by the thriving expectation of stimulation of curiosity, imagination, and a sense of awe among local visitors in their own way of seeing, experiencing, and interpreting the exhibited objects. This public appropriation of the museum’s exhibitions is offset by the work behind the scenes, where curators are obsessed by aspirations to mimic the Eurocentric museum’s framework and code of practices. The intersection, co-existence, and clash of these two sets of images—Western/non-Western and public/curatorial—drive this book to implode and ‘liberate’ (Kreps 2003) the museum from dominant Western conceptualisations and reveal other realities and understandings, such as the *Ajaib Ghar* in South Asia.

This book takes the global cultural technology of the ‘museum’—with its established discourse, history, and politics/poetics of representation and modes of consumption—and investigates it beyond the norms that have informed the institution since its modern birth and provided the main criteria for its research. I want to extend beyond the comfort zone, where we have a preconceived idea of what a museum is, and so largely do not question other possibilities of definition, cultural properties, and status attributes. Since our museum-consciousness is particularised and resultant of an explicit positioning that naturalises the institution and its meanings within Western civilisation (Butler 2007), the problematic I set concerns the suitability of this Eurocentric conception for understanding institutions in non-Western and postcolonial societies, where museums, as might be assumed, do not simply replicate this grand narrative.

Over the past two decades, the ‘New Museology’ (Vergo 1989) has instigated attempts to overcome this status quo around museums, making them active, responsive to community needs, and profitable as part of developments in the leisure and tourism industries associated with the flourishing ascendancy of heritage (Lowenthal 1998; Lumley 1988; Walsh 1992). This

new approach to the museum, which critically assessed/revised museum practice, forms of representation, and interpretation of culture (own and Other), was part of the larger self-reflexive turn taking place throughout the humanities, such as in anthropology (see Clifford 1988; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Marcus and Fischer 1986), and the interdisciplinary debates on cultural criticism and representation in this self-assessment incorporated all forms of representation, including the museum. One strand of this appraisal applied postcolonial theory to the museum space and, for disciplines such as anthropology, presented an ideal opportunity to critically revisit its own historical development, where, as part of colonial adventure and ethnography, material collections were formed and narratives signifying progress in relation to the Other guided displays in museums—in both the West and colonies such as India.

The intellectual reinvestment and interest in the museum by fields such as anthropology is a positive step; however, where they fail is in the ability to disrupt or question the prominence of the so-called ideal Eurocentric museum model that continues to be dominant and propagated from the 'centre.' This situation has led to in-depth studies of non-Western or postcolonial museums still remaining on the periphery in the global discourse on museums and cultural heritage (Butler 2007; Durrans 1988; Kreps 2003; Mathur 2007)—other museum experiences are usually judged in naive terms relative to Eurocentric perceptions and norms. It is this lacuna that I want to address in this ethnography of the Lahore Museum and the museum culture of South Asia generally, to break the Eurocentric hegemony and hold on museology and to allow for the possibility of 'museologies,' which can be achieved only by acknowledging, as Christina Kreps suggests, that 'those who have been marginalised as "the other" are central to the formulation of new museological paradigms' (2003:xiii). From an anthropological perspective, this engagement with museologies means carrying out 'comparative museology' (ibid.:146), to which Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge (1992) have also alluded, through the application of its basic premise: ethnography. The uptake of ethnography is being strongly stressed by recent research in museology and cultural heritage (Butler 2007; Kreps 2003; Merriman 1996) as it goes beyond stale oppositions of 'old' and 'new' museology to 'fully conceptualise a vision of [museums/cultural heritage] within a wider globalised and more grounded realpolitik' (Butler 2007:25). It is with the intention to move toward comparative museologies based on ethnography, grounded realpolitik, and localised appropriation that I explore the Lahore Museum in this book in terms of its history, development, representation, and visitor engagement.

My overarching aim is to readdress this theoretical and conceptual imbalance as well as the injustice and neglect that have been meted out to

the history and development of South Asian museums, which although parallel to that of the Western museum, is missing from the chronicles of museum history—while, ironically, many iconic museums in the West are redolent with objects from the spoils of colonialism in India. By employing a mixture of the archival, habitual, and experiential this book presents the first in-depth ethnographic study of a South Asian museum from an indigenous perspective; the book is especially attuned to the complexity of local museum processes, limitations, and enduring consumption practices/interpretations. In approaching and examining the Lahore Museum from the periphery, I aim to give non-Western museum cultures an autonomy beyond the confines of the Eurocentric museum model by offering a fresh and novel contribution toward the formulation of a comparative museology of South Asia that can efface singularity of museum conceptualisation, theorisation, practice, and appropriation. Thus I hope to open up avenues for parallel museum histories, cultures, and experiences that will also provide a solid grounding for burgeoning research and the establishment of a South Asian museology.

MUSEOLOGICAL NARRATIVE

Interjecting moments from the past and the present, in the following chapters I examine the Lahore Museum from multiple perspectives to build up a composite in-depth image of the institution: from British colonists' investment in museums—their collecting and exhibitionary activities to increase trade, promote art reform, and visualise India's history and culture for colonists and subjects—to attempts by Pakistani museologists to espouse notions of cultural/national heritage following Partition of the subcontinent in 1947. Most important, I examine the on-going translations by local visitors of the material culture and visual narratives on display at the museum through their own socialisation, which combines a desire to learn with a need for pleasure in seeing and experiencing the curious and wondrous.

These ideas were central to my research for this book from the beginning and have continued to be so in shaping how it develops and progresses to reveal varying facets of the Lahore Museum. The following chapters can be roughly divided into three types: historical ([Chapters 1 and 2](#)); postcolonial intersection and change ([Chapters 2 and 3](#)); and visitor ethnography ([Chapters 4 and 5](#))—with [Chapter 2](#) forming a transitional bridge between the past and the present. However, this approach does not impose a strict chronological order on how the chapters should be read; many of the Lahore Museum's contemporary concerns relating to collections, curatorial challenges, and visitors are interestingly congruent with and contingent on those affecting it in the past. In [Chapters 2](#),

4, and 5 parallels between the past and present are drawn to prevent history from being a mere linear sedimentation of facts.

Chapter 1 is based on archival research and examines the introduction of museums to colonial India, couching the Lahore Museum's own historical development (1856–1947) within this larger colonial intervention and its discursive practices that sought to collect, visualise, and represent Indian society as objectified knowledge for both coloniser and colonised. The historical record shows that the initial onus was not only on collecting, classifying, and displaying artefacts but on the pragmatics of creating museum-minded staff out of government administrators/officials, finding suitable locations, and funding. The Lahore Museum is a prime exemplar of this museum development in colonial India from almost ad hoc beginnings to eventual inclusion of elite Indians as curators. In the growth and expansion of the Lahore Museum, three main phases are identified: *Baradari*, Exhibition Building, and Jubilee Institute. This chapter not only traces the history of the museum in South Asia as part of colonial culture and its manipulation by colonisers in constructing visual knowledge about India but also points to the fact that a South Asian museum model can be rooted in its own specific history, although linked to the 'centre,' and should not be taken as a simple derivative. This chapter draws attention to how the museum, once transposed to India, underwent 'tropicalization' (Prakash 1999) and translation; local conditions and encounters, affected by administration and personalities with their own agendas, directed and influenced development—a prime example being J. L. Kipling and his interest in reforming and salvaging Indian crafts from the destructive powers of industrialisation through importation of the Arts and Crafts ideology via the South Kensington Museum to Indian museums and art schools. This historical trajectory is retained in Chapter 2, where attention shifts to the transition from colonial to postcolonial society as the archival explorations of Chapter 1 end with the departure of the British from India in 1947, leaving South Asia with the new emergent nation-states of Independent India and Pakistan after Partition.

Chapter 2 engages with the ramifications of the turbulent Partition period in the subcontinent that not only divided land and peoples but also split the Lahore Museum's collection, leaving it to attempt postcolonial reworking. Dismissing at the outset the anticipated clear-cut decolonisation from colonial to postcolonial representation, this chapter scrutinises the difficulties inherent in transforming a colonial museum into a postcolonial institution that strives to symbolise the new nation of Pakistan. This decolonising of the fractured Lahore Museum is contextualised within the political history of pre-Partition India and post-Partition Pakistan. The main concern is around attempts at reconstruction and

reformulation of the colonial material archive into one that is expected to reflect national identity, heritage, and ideology. However, the extent to which this transformation is possible is assessed in light of the ability of a museum such as the Lahore Museum to change and serve the national-self by overthrowing its own history and colonial shadow. Linking the past with the present, this chapter also marks the shift from historical analysis to that of ethnography, adding to the historical and object focus the voices of museum professionals and curators (further developed in the next chapter), which elucidates the Lahore Museum's habitual discourse and *realpolitik*.

Chapter 3 deals with Lahore Museum's behind-the-scenes everyday working culture, institutional structure, and habitual discourse and praxis. It brings together the many voices of people who work or have worked at the museum as well as those linked to the institution through professional, administrative, or cultural associations. In particular, I try to give voice to the curators, or Gallery In-Charges as they are called at the Lahore Museum, so that they can reveal both their aspirations for the museum and the obstacles that arise in achieving these. These curatorial musings are situated within the wider context and relevance of local, national, and global museum and cultural heritage organisations' discourses and communications on the Lahore Museum and its *modus operandi*. From this institutional level, the chapter moves on to pick up one trope that the Lahore Museum forcefully associates with itself: that of being an educational institution. This desired functioning of the museum has a major influence on museum staffs at all levels in envisioning their own and the museum's success, struggle, and capabilities. The chapter explores these aspirations of the Lahore Museum to be an institution for informal education through ethnography of the educational activities provisioned at the museum. The difficulty in achieving this pedagogic mission is again rooted in the Eurocentric model, which offers an ideal but does not take into account hindering local factors such as fiscal deficiency, nonprofessional attitudes, and weak Pakistani museology as well as cultural factors such as the wonder and curiosity of those visiting (who include the ideal learner—the students), which are the major focus of the following two chapters.

Chapters 4 and 5 concern the so-far mute public of the Lahore Museum, who, ever since the colonial period, have been actively appropriating this institution but whose intentions or learning experiences have remained ambiguous.

Chapter 4 critically deconstructs the relevance of the Eurocentric museum model's ideal visitor to understand South Asian visitors and their popular conceptualisation of the museum as a wonder house and a place of curiosity. At a superficial level, such local interpretations can be

rendered as ‘uneducated’; however, this chapter, through an ethnography of museum visitors’ experience, suggests that the dichotomy of the educated versus uneducated interpretation and behaviour is inappropriate for illuminating the visitor experience in South Asia.⁴ Visitors’ accounts reveal that legitimate appropriations of the museum mix aspects of learning, history, and culture with the curious, and so the rightful appropriation is squarely with the *ajaiib*.

Chapter 5 delves further into investigating the museum visitors by focusing specifically on visual consumption filtered through South Asian modes of visibility that follow an optical grammar employed and experienced in other arenas of society that coterminously socialise the museum beyond its four walls. This chapter attempts to relate the Lahore Museum as part of Lahore’s visualscape and strengthens the argument presented in Chapter 4 that attraction, curiosity, and pleasure are critical in South Asian consumption, from which the museum cannot be separated. Moving beyond a linguistic analysis of consumption, this chapter highlights the pertinence of visibility and bodily experience or ‘tactile vision’ (Pinney 2002a) in adequately comprehending South Asian museum appropriation. Experience of other visual spaces that visitors consume in their everyday life—television/film, bazaars, and saints’ shrines—are related back to understanding visitors’ expectations when they stand in front of an exhibit in the Lahore Museum. Visitor behaviour and consumption practices are shown not to be consequential of contemporary society alone, since archival evidence records similar modes of interaction, and so perhaps one can stipulate that enduring modes of museum encounters have existed in South Asia since the museum institution was tropicalised. The interrelation of the book’s chapters ultimately offers a combination of the archival, historical, ethnographic, and experiential that opens up these important institutions that are a vibrant part of South Asian society today and cannot be easily reduced to versions or failures of the Eurocentric museum model but have their own resonance and persisting resistance. It is this ‘irreducibility’ (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:231) that attracts and draws attention to such museums as the Lahore Museum because they reveal that there is no single logic of the museum; instead, there are museum cultures and museologies that need dialogue with each other. One such conversation is presented here.

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Chapter 1

MUSEUMS IN TRANSLATION

The Birth of the Museum in Colonial India



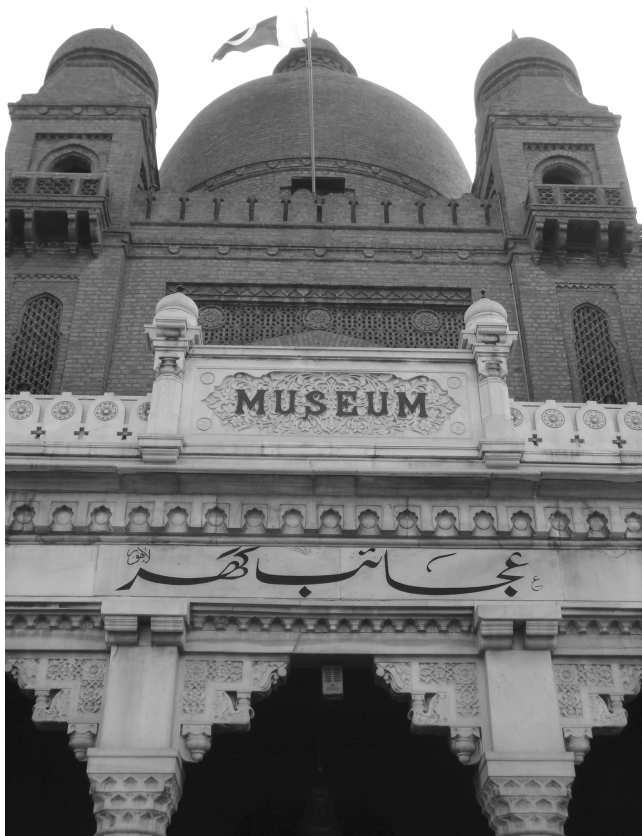
A collection properly grouped together becomes to the intelligent spectator, a perfect history of the social condition of the country it represents. The peculiarities of various tribes are revealed by their trade, implements . . . while the prevalence of peculiar classes of manufactures, the specimens of their fine arts, and their musical instruments give an insight into the tastes and habits of the people, and indicate to a certain extent, the phenomena of their mental and moral condition.

—B. H. Baden-Powell (1868)¹

THE AJAIB GHAR²

In the early morning the Lahore Museum is serene and picturesque, the majestic Indo-Saracenic domes of exposed red brick architecture stand tall, three cannons ‘protecting’ the site, surrounding gardens lush green and fresh with dew, pathways clean, and the traffic still only a trickle as it passes by on the Mall Road.³ This tranquillity is broken only when the gallery clerks and security guards, clad in their blue livery, approach the ornately decorated marble façade inscribed in black with the word ‘Museum’ and below in Urdu *Ajaib Ghar*, at the front of the museum (illus. 2). Shuffling around they eventually form a neat line near the steps of the main entrance in anticipation of the daily opening ceremony. Museum officers appear and huddle around the ‘stage’ set for the Director, whose ensuing appearance causes a hush among the

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2 Lahore Museum's façade

collected. Then in a fashion similar to his gait, the Director hurriedly proceeds to offer his 'message of the day' and recite a small prayer. Only then are the large wooden doors flung open.

Light floods in and suddenly illuminates the dark expanse ahead of the vestibule and the central gallery beyond. Initially only dust particles appear in the atmosphere, but then as the light softly falls, shapes, surfaces, and silhouettes of things present manifest themselves. The start of another day's performance for the Lahore Museum is signalled. Rapidly the museum awakes to the sound of footsteps and voices, lights are switched on in each gallery exposing a myriad of objects in a flash. Only a minute ago these objects were bathed in darkness, invisible and silent, locked up in display cases, hanging on walls or seated on the floor; now they become the centre of attention. Gallery clerks and security

guards scurry toward their respective gallery to begin their duty. The former, with a list in hand, peer into each display case and with due care count the objects, tallying this number with last night's count; hoping that none of the objects has 'wandered.' The latter look around, surveying the gallery while simultaneously erasing evidence of yesterday's visitors—fingerprints, handprints, and smeared hair oil left behind on the glass of the display cases—preparing a clean surface for the inevitable fresh imprints to come. All this is in preparation for the arrival of the Gallery In-Charges, who come and inspect their galleries in the morning: a walk around examining 'their' displays, making sure object figures match, ascertaining all is in order—a quick signature, and they return to their offices at the rear of the museum. The objects now stand firmly fixed in the 'protective' vision of both the guards on duty and the all-seeing CCTV, waiting to be touched and felt by the various gazes of visitors who will enter the museum.

Outside, on the right-hand side, the Curio Shop is also open, its wares being dusted and arranged. To the left, next to the auditorium/library entrance, two small shops—Kim's Bookshop and a souvenir-*cum*-ticket office—are being organised. The sweeper drags his broom along the curbs, raising clouds of dust in a never-ending effort to clean, while the *mali* ('gardener') tends to the gardens. Lahore, too, is in full action, the Mall Road now a visible and audible mass of jostling traffic, cars and buses hooting, rickshaws revving, school vans packed to capacity with children, bicycles weaving, all trying to outdo one another as early visitors make their way to the *Ajaib Ghar*.

Inside the twenty-two galleries⁴ await a multitude of visual treats in all manner of shapes, sizes, textures, materials, and styles. After one passes through the security check⁵ in the entrance lobby, one's axis of vision is tunnelled in the direction of the Jain *Mandir* in the far end and, from the vestibule, the Miniature Painting Gallery (*illus. 3*) pans out. Beautifully carved wooden doors, lit from above, appear on either side (illustrated in *Chapter 4*); overhead on the high ceiling the mural's blues and oranges drag the gaze upward (*Chapter 2*), the miniatures encased along the side walls. To the right is the General Gallery with wooden doors and *jharokay* ('balconies') suspended high on the walls, with display cases along the walls exhibiting Sikh relics; ivory miniatures; old *sherwanian* (men's coat-like garments); copper and brass utensils; Chinese vases and porcelain; a piece of the Berlin Wall; gems; giant calligraphic Qu'rans; African masks, seals, and wooden effigies; Sanskrit manuscripts; soap-stone artefacts; Chinese scrolls; miniature ivory chess pieces; an elephant tusk with carvings of Buddha; an inlaid Chinese wooden screen; a robe; opium smoking pipes; and distributed in between the pillars, small cases showing manuscripts and old maps of Lahore (*illus. 4*).



3 Miniature Painting Gallery (Central Gallery)

Directly opposite, across from the Miniature Painting Gallery, is the Islamic Gallery, its walls covered with large panels of Islamic calligraphy, carpets, copper plates, and an inscribed piece of marble (*illus. 5*). The gallery floor teems with a myriad of objects—a large Mughal carpet, small cannons, pieces of tombstones, and stonework. Display cases, again, set against the wall, offer *papier-mâché* objects; Damascene ware; a variety of smoking *hookah* bases; arms; walking sticks; glass mosaics; glazed tiles; woodwork; inlaid marble; musical instruments; garments; woollen shawls; footwear; jewellery; carved ivory; mother of pearl and horn objects; glazed pottery; gold and silver filigree work; enamel ware; rosaries; and a few Qu’rans. Moving westward one sees an entrance to the northern end of the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery (*illus. 6*).⁶ With no central lighting and deep burgundy walls, this gallery



4 General Gallery



5 Islamic Gallery



6 Burmese Buddha in the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery

has its own ‘aura.’ At the northern end, a magnificent gilded lacquer Buddha sits on a decorated stand, gleaming as spotlights highlight its contours, and on either side cases hold Tibetan and Burmese objects in metal, wood, and *papier-mâché* and, in a stand-alone case, a wooden model of a *Panch Mandiri* temple. In front of the carved wooden archway that segregates the gallery is an entrance/exit to the Prehistoric and Indus Civilisation Gallery (illus. 7), which includes pottery shards; terracotta pots; vessels; sling balls; weights; jewellery; toys; figurines and goddesses; jars; shell and bronze objects; stone tools as well as toys from Harrapa and Moenjodaro.

Returning back to the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery on the other side of the archway, one sees a collection of stoneware in the centre—a plaster cast of the Sarnath Lion Capital, a Shiva-Ling (minus the lingam), a tall red sandstone pillar, and various inscribed tablets (original and casts) with Kharosthi script and even hieroglyphics. Around the walls are exhibits of Hindu deities and their escorts—Vishnu, Shiva, Ganesh, and Nandi in brass; marble statues of Hanuman, Radha and Krishna; ivory Krishna; Surya in stone; and a wooden Sarasvati. Sprinkled among these are temple accoutrements—Hindu and Buddhist lamps, trays, and ornamental vessels. Temple banners hang as representatives of Nepalese



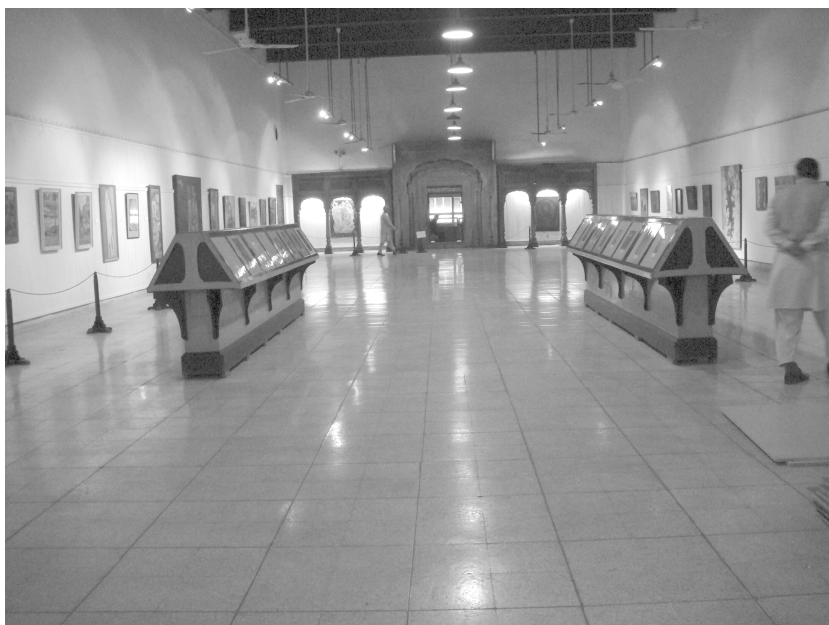
7 Prehistoric and Indus Civilisation Gallery

Buddhism, which is also represented by some Gautam(a) statuettes. The abundance of statues (*bhut*) continues in the Jain(a) section, with sculptures of Mahavir(a) and his footsteps. The southern wall has as its central feature a richly sculpted stone fireplace, in front of which stand three large sculptures—one of a marble lion, in the centre a sandstone Buddha, and the third a marble Nandi.

The doorway at this end leads into the Gandhara Gallery,⁷ which is dominated by the Sikri Stupa exhibited in the centre with a couple of benches that position the gaze onto the drum's relief work (*illus. 8*). One side of the gallery tells the life story of Buddha as depicted through *Jataka* ('scenes') executed in stone relief—from pre-incarnations to enlightenment and death. Interspersed in other cases are statues/busts of Bodhisattva/Buddha in various poses, the most prized being the stunning Fasting Siddhartha.⁸ The Buddha image dominates and is available for close inspection in the six statues displayed on the western wall. Stucco and terracotta heads/figures provide the only colour in what is otherwise a gallery of grey schist. This gallery leads back into the Miniature Painting Gallery, and directly opposite is the Contemporary Paintings Gallery with wood-panelled walls that have an array of 'paintings'⁹—landscapes, portraits, still life, calligraphy, modernist, and abstract (*illus. 9*). A cacophony of images, colours, and textures jump out and are kept at a distance by a rope:



8 Gandhara Gallery



9 Contemporary Paintings Gallery

blues that seem to be figure-like; a captivating young woman seated with a lace *duppatta* falling on one side; a scene from the Walled City of Lahore; a mosaic of polo players; the *Sheesh Mahal* (Mirror Palace at Lahore Fort); a *fakir*; a vibrant scene of Tenth Muharram; a fairy tale composition; village scenes; and seminude bathers. Ahead, additional visual assortment is presented in the Manuscripts and Calligraphy Gallery,¹⁰ accessible from the Contemporary Paintings Gallery through another magnificently carved wooden doorway (illus. 10). Beautiful Qu'ranic calligraphies in Arabic and Persian with elegantly illuminated decorative borders are displayed along with enchanting *Tugras*.¹¹ Returning past the paintings one again reaches the Miniature Painting Gallery, but closer to the Jain *Mandir* that was first spotted afar.

On the right, a tall archway frames the *mandir* that is located just beyond, standing in the middle of this small passage gallery, just over 1 metre square and about 7 metres high (illus. 11). This domed white marble *mandir*, gilded and painted, enshrines footprints of the Mahavir(a); on the back wall, on both sides of the wooden door sign-posted as Offices,¹² are identical marble statues of Jain Tirthankaras seated in small marble *jharokay*, as if keeping guard of the shrine. On the right is a long slim gallery, separated by some arches, called the Ethnological Gallery II (Swat) and Ethnological Gallery III (Fabrics) (illus. 12); the former offers all manner of traditional objects from the Swat region, such as furniture, garments, jewellery, utensils, and rugs.

Beyond the arches, in what is called the Fabrics Gallery, more often referred to as the Toy gallery,¹³ three-quarters of the cases are full of clay models depicting various people, tableaux of rituals, fruits, and animals.¹⁴ Colourful and full of expression, these models are by far the



10 Manuscripts and Calligraphy Gallery

most popular attraction of the museum; they contain an astrologer, a military officer, a hunter, a butter seller, an old Pathan, some sweepers, a Sadhu, and a Gujarati woman. The tableaux versions include stages of Muslim *namaz*, a wrestling match, blacksmith's workshop, a Shiv(a) Ling(a) *puja*, a rice grinder, and a panoramic view of the Baluchi countryside. The next few cases contain a selection of draped fabrics showing embroidery styles and colour combinations of different *Pulkari* ('floral') patterns, delicately embroidered Chamba *rumal* ('handkerchiefs') with scenes from Hindu mythology, and a couple of small spinning wheels with painted clay tableaux of weavers at work. Under the arches, past the section representing traditional Swat sartorial style, around the Jain *Mandir*, the next gallery to catch the gaze, with an elaborately carved wooden balcony displayed in situ, is the Jain Gallery ([illus. 13](#)).



11 Jain Mandir



12 Ethnological II (Swat) and Ethnological III (Fabrics) Galleries

The balcony's colourful panes look down onto the marble Tirthankaras displayed on plinths or in front of a carved wooden door bordered by low-level marble latticework. On one side, a large marble plaque—part relief and part painted in greens, reds, blues, and highlighted with gilt—depicts dense imagery illustrating the Jain pilgrimage site of Kathiawar, narrating visually the pilgrim's trail from the train station around the numerous shrines. The warm atmosphere of this gallery provides stark contrast to the next gallery, only a couple of steps away.

As one approaches the Arms and Armoury Gallery, painted throughout in a rather dull jade, the old wooden display cases of previous galleries disappear and are replaced by large glass-panelled cases with painted metallic frames (*illus. 14*). The first visual confrontation is with the unexpected heavy bronze statue of Queen Victoria gazing sternly at all



13 Jain Gallery

who enter. George V and Edward VII flank her, with cannons in front and behind. Her sharp gaze is complemented by the collection of swords, bows and arrows, guns, daggers, and axes arranged with geometrical finesse; shining shells, polished helmets, and chain mail add to the gallery's 'splendours' of warfare.

The next section is the Ethnological I Gallery, where each case is dedicated to regions¹⁵ of Pakistan (illus. 15). The first case overflows with vessels, guns, ewers, drums, sculptures, and lamps set against a large photograph of the Kafir Kalash,¹⁶ collectively denoting the Northern Areas. The largest section is on Punjab and displays earthen pots, brass utensils, musical instruments such as the *dolkhi*, a seated bride, shawls, anklets, models of fruits and vegetables, a cooking stove, and *hookay*. Similar objects with their ethnic markers are exhibited for Dera Ghazi Khan, adjacent to which musical instruments from the Northern Areas are shown, followed by a case full of ethnic jewellery. In the corner is a doorway that leads to the Sadequain Gallery in the basement.¹⁷ On the wall after the doorway are hung six prints epitomising typical scenes of traditional life in Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, Khyber, and Kalash, as well as one of a Punjabi potter. The last case is dedicated to the Deserts, essentially that of Sindh, with vibrantly coloured embroideries, shimmering mirror-work of wall hangings, cushions, and clothes exhibited alongside a miniature hut. After this



14 Arms and Armoury Gallery



15 Ethnological I Gallery

burst of colour, one returns to the Arms and Armoury Gallery, heading past Queen Victoria and the aeroplane tail of an Indian fighter jet; then a staircase is approached that leads upstairs.

As one ascends the often crowded, narrow staircase, one immediately perceives a difference—the presence of daylight. The stairs end in the Independence Movement Gallery, a long and narrow gallery that winds around the Pakistan Postage Stamps Gallery, with rows of postage stamps and first-day covers from Independence in 1947 to the present day. Before one reaches the display of the Independence story, a passage leads off to the right—essentially a bridge over the back of the museum offices into the Contemporary Crafts Gallery. This gallery honours present-day crafts—woodwork, lacquer ware, marble and semi-precious decorative objects, *papier-mâché* fruits, vegetables, dolls, brass and copper pieces, ivory/bone jewellery, silver ornaments, embroideries, and block-printed cloth. One end-case is intended as homage to all these crafts but appears more like a storeroom with all manner of representative crafts hoarded to fill a space. In the centre stand two cases, one holding stuffed animals, the other a model of a mosque; on a lower level there is a freestanding model of the identifiable Badshahi Mosque and a wooden box with copper and brass inlay. This assortment contrasts with the next gallery, the Coins and Medals Gallery, accessible from the Contemporary Crafts Gallery, with its neat rows of replica coins (illus. 16) chronologically displayed—small, punched, with images and text, in



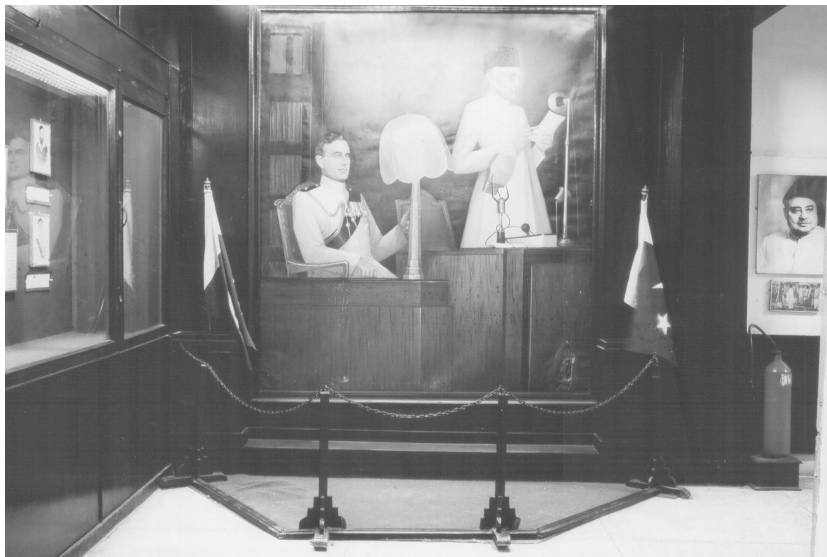
16 Medals section of the Coins and Medals Gallery



17 Coins section of the Coins and Medals Gallery

different metals, all narrating history in numismatics—and ending with medals of the Pakistan Army (*illus. 17*).

Back over the bridge the last section awaits—the Independence Movement Gallery (*illus. 18*), essentially a picture gallery of mainly black and white copies of photographs, sketches, maps, and newspaper front pages. The overarching focus documents the ‘two hundred years of struggle for Muslim Independence from 1757 to 1947,’ visually examining the fall of Seringapatam, The War of Independence in 1857 (Mutiny), and ensuing Islamic movements, particularly the Muslim League, in attaining Independence and the creation of Pakistan. The personalities of Independence are celebrated in the images: particularly Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Fatima Jinnah, and Allama Iqbal. Large text panels in Urdu introduce each section of this *tebreek* (‘history’), although the images are far more alluring, with the climax being the establishment of Pakistan—sadly evidenced by photographs of masses of refugees arriving from India. The final image in this ‘album’ is a large painting of Jinnah making his first speech as Governor General of Pakistan with Lord Mountbatten looking on, flanked by Pakistani flags that museologically affirm Pakistan’s creation. The last case is the *Shaheed* Gallery, which displays images of martyrs who died in subsequent wars and the medals they were awarded (*illus. 19*).



18 Independence Movement Gallery

The only way now is back out, down the stairs, as one glances again at some of the galleries and objects, past the Jain *Mandir* under the mural and the vestibule dome, past the security check, and into the open. The Lahore Museum toured, images seen and memorised, surfaces felt and desired, the visitors leave or rest in the gardens tired, happy, confused, amazed, or disappointed. Security and gallery clerks once again count the objects, tired after a day's performance, and Gallery In-Charges arrive to sign and leave. With the last visitors gone, lights are switched off and the wooden doors locked and sealed, the objects silent once again watched only by the CCTV so that none may escape. Outside dusk falls, and the Lahore Museum takes on a new hue, the building once again majestic—this time lit by small lights simulating the effect of *deeyay* ('oil lamps') (illus. 20).

The preceding textual and visual tour of the galleries provides a glimpse into the rich diversity of the Lahore Museum's collections. More significantly, it demonstrates the active resistance to and impossibility of a singular categorisation and provision of identity for the museum as a place of art, history, archaeology, ethnography, or science. Instead, what comes to mind is an evocation of something akin to Duncan and Wallich's (1980) 'Universal Survey Museum' or 'Encyclopaedic Museum,' alluding not to a modern totalising trope but the variety and fecund nature of the collections that reflect diversity and the ordering and exhibiting practices in the colonial past and Pakistani present. This eclecticism does



19 *Shaheed Gallery*

not suggest that the objects displayed are ahistorical but brings forth their ideological elasticity, which allows wrappings of various meanings by different social groups through time and space. Today the material and architectural rhetoric of the Lahore Museum symbolises to some the heritage of Pakistan's national, cultural, historical selves; some see the museum as a panoply of beautiful and wondrous things seen only at the *Ajaib Ghar*, while others regard it as a decaying institution caught up in a time warp of its own.¹⁸ In this sense, the museum has polysemous meanings and qualities that allow it to be manipulated at one level by authoritative discourses, as Duncan and Wallich comment: 'The museum's primary function is ideological. It is meant to impress upon those who use or pass through it society's most revered beliefs and values' (1980:449), but whether this ideological impression takes place so easily is debateable and points to contested and critical interpretations by visitors (Chapter 4).



20 Lahore Museum at Dusk

The scene set so far is that of the contemporary situation in which, as the Director's oft-repeated phrase states: 'The Lahore Museum is second place in South Asia and tenth in the world in terms of its collections (*navadrat*).'¹⁹ This claim reveals the museum's inclination toward attaining global and regional cultural status; yet what I elucidate in this chapter is how the Lahore Museum reached this present state and status. Is it enough to claim that the museum, as a global cultural technology, has successfully implanted itself wholesale the world over? This museum expansion is to some extent true, but what becomes shrouded in this simplification is the historical exegesis pertaining to when and how particular institutions formed. If we think about the museum as an ideological space that conveys beliefs and values to and about a society, the question arises: who in society use(d), create(d), and (trans)form(ed) the Lahore Museum throughout its life?

Glancing back to the initial quotation by Baden-Powell from his *Handbook of the Economic Products of the Punjab Volume I* (1868), we notice a difference in ideology and hegemony compared to those of

today, which prompts us to investigate earlier ‘avatars’ (Barthes 1963)²⁰ of the Lahore Museum and its collections. It is this ‘past’ of the Lahore Museum that I address in the rest of the chapter, when the British methodically collected, organised, and exhibited India in museums as a new visual domain underscored by a mixture of political, social, scientific, and cultural judgements. During a heightened period of the ‘world as exhibition’ (Harvey 1996), I highlight the planned and systematic introduction of the museum, specifically the Lahore Museum, to India from the early nineteenth century onward.

Examining the emergence and development of the Lahore Museum, I do not recall a history of facts; rather I follow Bernard Cohn and ‘treat the materials of history the way an anthropologist treats his field notes’ (1987:2). I employ this approach in order to investigate the colonial situation ‘in which the European colonist and the indigene are united in one analytical field’ (ibid.:44). My intention is to explore moments, perceptions, ideas, interactions, exclusions, and actions between the British and the Indians that were pervasive in the colonial museological ‘contact zone’ (Clifford 1997) that emerged in nineteenth-century India. Museums and exhibitions in colonial India enabled these encounters and possibilities of communication through their fundamental requirements of both collectors and a public, and so success hinged on the presence of both British *and*, significantly, Indians. Yet we must not forget that most exhibiting practices were curated through the coloniser’s modalities and discourses of representation,²¹ so that visual manifestations were explicitly glossed in the all-pervasive dynamics and aspirations of the British in nineteenth- and twentieth-century India, as Nicholas Dirks (1992) makes evident: colonial knowledge *both* enabled conquest and was produced by it.

MUSEUMISATION OF COLONIAL INDIA: MAKING INDIA VISIBLE

The birth of the museum in colonial India can be traced to the Asiatic Society of Bengal’s plans to form a museum in 1796, only forty years after the inception of the British Museum. Established in 1784 by the renowned Orientalist Sir William Jones, the Asiatic Society was intended as a forum for scholarly research of ‘knowledge,’ which Jones saw as being ‘extended to whatever is performed by man or produced by nature’ (*Indian Museum 1814–1914* 1914:2). It is within this ‘extended’ role, beyond the textual and linguistic moorings of Indian society,²² that the museum took root in early nineteenth-century India. One aspect of the Asiatic Society’s activities included its role as a repository for ‘relics and curiosities’ deposited by its members—East India Company officers and travellers alike—and it was only in 1814 after the museum was

realised, under the curatorship of the Danish Botanist Dr. Nathaniel Wallich, that the collections were exhibited and made accessible.²³ For the Asiatic Society, a museum was of practical necessity to order, classify, and map its ad hoc collections into manageable visual knowledge illustrating India's 'Oriental manner and history . . . peculiarities of art and nature' (Markham and Hargreaves 1936:5). Just as new vistas of India were being fed to the public back home,²⁴ the museum institution in the colony, using the 'museumizing imagination' (Anderson 1991:173), was gradually making India conceptually and materially 'visible' (Pomian 1990) to scholars, administrators, and curiosity mongers, who, following the Mutiny in 1857, urgently sought knowledge for critical investigation of India. This activity introduced the museum to political 'authority'²⁵ as an ideal institution for gaining knowledge and disseminating its ideologies through exhibits.

In 1865, the Asiatic Society's collections were transferred into the newly founded Imperial Museum, which covered zoology, geology, and archaeology/epigraphy. Renamed the Indian Museum in 1892, it opened its doors to the public in 1901, and with the addition of sections on ethnology, economic products, natural history, art, and industrial art, it steadily came to symbolise colonial power, order, and the unity of the Raj—even if only within the museum's four walls. The Indian Museum was promoted as an 'imperial model'²⁶ for other museums in India to emulate, but it also epitomised the pursuance of an 'imperial archive' (Guha-Thakurta 1997a) that is characteristic of much colonial museological activity. Economic products, arts, ethnology, archaeology, geology, and so forth were obsessively accessioned²⁷ as part of government surveys/tours carried out by officers, naturalists, and scientists attached to punitive or boundary expeditions. This 'survey and grid' formula enabled a holistic image/imagining of India to be mapped and fixed inside the museum space, which could be easily investigated and manipulated to fit changing ideologies. However, the imperial model was not alone in propagating early colonial museums in India; other efforts were also made, such as in 1819, when the Madras Literary Society discussed establishing a museum, which eventually was formed in 1851, as were Sir Bartle Frere's Victoria Memorial Museum, Karachi, and the first medical museum in Grant Medical College, Bombay.

By 1857, Hargreaves and Markham (1936) record twelve museums in India,²⁸ with the likelihood of increase as the East India Company recognised the usefulness of museums; in relation to Madras they were 'impressed with the advantage of storing up in some one place the knowledge and the material which had been acquired by the investigators working on different parts of the Peninsula, and with the object of fostering scientific enquiries and pursuits.'²⁹

The next flurry of museums³⁰ came in the 1860s, with the batch known as ‘Jubilee Museums,’ then came a surge in the late 1880s through to the 1890s, with an outburst of archaeological museums as part of Lord Curzon’s revival of the Archaeological Survey of India. Curzon saw ‘It [was] . . . equally our duty to dig and discover, to classify, reproduce and describe, to copy and decipher, and to cherish and conserve’ (quoted in Anderson 1991:179ff30). By 1935, Markham and Hargreaves (1936) note 105 public museums in India that existed in a hierarchy: the Indian Museum served as the mother institution, next came Provincial Museums with satellites of District Museums, followed by specialist museums such as archaeological or scientific and last by private museums of Princely Indian States or Learned Societies. In this way, a network of museums emerged in India during the nineteenth century that was connected through the flow of objects, ideas, and people in India as well as imperial centre. I take up these issues at one museum that was squarely positioned within these movements and represents India’s colonial museum movement firmly within the nascent globalisation of the institution—the Lahore Museum.³¹

A CENTRAL MUSEUM FOR PUNJAB—A *BARADARI*,
AN EXHIBITION, AND A JUBILEE

D. E. McLeod (Financial Commissioner for Punjab) in a letter to R. Temple (Secretary to the Chief Commissioner)³² discusses the appeal of establishing museums in the Punjab³³ to assess the province’s ‘potential’ and ‘develop the resources of the country and give direction . . . [to those desiring] improvements in agriculture, machinery and the arts.’³⁴ This aspiration was a considered move by the Financial Commissioner to survey, collect, and disseminate information on ‘improvements’—in other words ‘trade’ and ‘economy’—of the province, and so at an early stage the museum was implicated directly in such ‘calculations’ as part of colonial administration. A circular,³⁵ copied with McLeod’s letter to all commissioners of the division, reveals his thoughts and asks all district officers and interested individuals to give their suggestions openly on the matter. He writes: ‘It appears to me very desirable that some systematical effort should be made towards collecting specimens of the natural products of the Punjab—and having these rendered accessible to all, who may desirous of informing themselves upon the subject.’³⁶

McLeod garnered insights from similar discussions in other parts of India, such as the ideas published in a private pamphlet³⁷ containing extracts of papers presented by the Resident at Travancore—Major-General Cullen, to the Madras Government in 1843 on the subject of District Museums. Cullen advises, in relation to the Madras Presidency, that things should not

be left to chance—not to the ‘unconnected exertions and contributions of individuals’ (Cullen 1843:4–5) but to ‘collectors,’ such as Civil Engineers in collaboration with influential natives. The ensuing collections were to be deposited in museums under an officer’s charge, who along with an assistant could ‘promote’ them to their best advantage. For Cullen, this process would accumulate a very good collection within a couple of years and result in a ‘memoir’ of an area as well as information and statistics that could be shared to educate East India Company’s officers, interested individuals, and scientific bodies, unlocking for them possibilities for ‘improvement’ or exploitation in agriculture and trade.

For McLeod, Cullen’s ideas served as pointers, containing suggestions of a ‘practical character’ that could be modified as per circumstances, and so it is worth quoting his vision in 1855 based on the pamphlet since it offers a rare insight into the early discourse and exchange on museums within India. He writes:

The Museum of each District shall thus be composed of the collective specimens obtained from other Districts, added to those procurable within itself—and these Museums might be extended ultimately as means and opportunity might allow; so as to include besides natural products, [durable] specimens . . . manufactures peculiar to each locality, the more interesting objects of Natural History and such like.³⁸

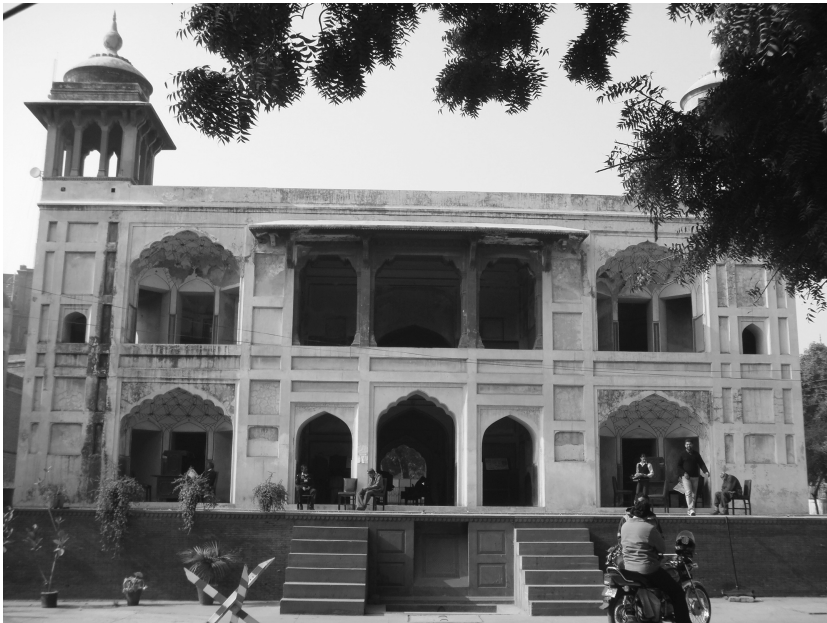
To head these museums, McLeod, like Cullen, wanted to find government officials possessing an enquiring mind and the ability for rational ordering and display, hoping that ‘in each District there will usually be found some one individual at least, connected with the civil administration or the Engineer Department, or the medical service, who takes an interest in such enquiries, and would willingly take charge of a Museum.’³⁹ These discussions led to the Chief Commissioner approving McLeod’s plan for a network of district museums to be set up in the Punjab and at the provincial level—the Lahore Museum.⁴⁰

Baradari

Lahore got its museum the next year,⁴¹ as informed retrospectively by Baden-Powell in his *General Report on the Lahore Central Museum up to March, 1868*:⁴² ‘the old Museum that existed since 1856 in the building now occupied by the Anarkali Book Club’ (1868:431). This comment helps pinpoint the initial location of the museum at Wazir Khan’s *Baradari* (illus. 21),⁴³ a seventeenth-century Mughal building, which the British used for military purposes, later a Settlement Office, Telegraph Office, and then a museum (Qureshi 2000). The museum’s state at this time is difficult to assess, although inferences can be made.

An anonymous traveller wrote to the editor of the *Lahore Chronicle* on July 23, 1856, stating that the museum was being managed by a regular Committee ‘under the eye of the highest local authorities,’ but the writer believed that in terms of collections the Amritsar Museum deserved the title ‘Museum of the Punjab’ (ibid.:211). However, by 1860 T. H. Thornton⁴⁴ was in charge, and his correspondence⁴⁵ alludes to an active institution aiming to establish a Geological Department while acquiring numerous ethnological casts belonging to ‘Hindu and Aboriginal’ tribes, ‘Pathans, foreign tribes and Tinke Tibetans.’⁴⁶ Thornton’s attraction for this incomplete collection was based on the simple fact that it allowed comparison between types: ‘The gradual transformation of the pure Hindu face into the Tibetan and vice versa . . . also the general similarity of the Jewish and affghan [*sic*] countenance.’⁴⁷

Thornton nicely exemplifies how McLeod’s colonial administrators were becoming museum professionals and dabbling in a number of subjects such as ethnology, archaeology, and geology. It was the museum space, acting as ‘ordering houses,’ where objects were classified and displayed to make evident a particular rendering of Indian society that empowered this ‘interest’ to develop. However, it must not be assumed that ambiguity was replaced by clarity obtained from modern disciplines



21 Wazir Khan’s *Baradari*

guiding the museum, as suggested by Thornton's letter; far from it, deposits of odd curiosities or collections gathered here and there continued to arrive. In addition, the museum was becoming popular among the public; as Thornton reports, over 800 visitors came to the museum in 1860, nearly doubling the previous year's figures, although it is unclear who the visitors were.

Another memorandum—Dr. H. Cleghorn's *The Local Museums of the Punjab*⁴⁸—also stands as a window into these nascent stages of organisation and museum development within the Punjab. Cleghorn describes the Lahore Museum as being 'chiefly antiquarian' and as usefully conveying 'to the mind of the visitor clear conceptions of the ancient history of the capital of the Punjab' (ibid.:5). He identifies two principal needs for the museum: first, space and light for better exhibition of objects, and, second, acquisition of an economic specimens (raw and manufactured) series, which when '*conspicuously labelled with descriptive tickets, and . . . accompanied with colored drawings of the producing plants . . . will do as much good as many books and lectures to advance commerce and agriculture*' (emphasis original, ibid.:5). Instructional value was then dependent on specimens collected and authenticated by government officials and on the efficacy of displays to direct visually enquiring minds toward potential profit. One definitive way to improve this capacity for Cleghorn was through emulation of the South Kensington Museum's systematic divisions of collections into classes and sections that would also attract public attention and lucidly symbolise the wealth of the Province, or, more accurately, the potential wealth. Punjab museums were making steady progress as they aligned their exhibitionary standards to fulfil the official economic criteria and match museums in the imperial centre while trying to establish a network of museum 'interchange';⁴⁹ but for the Lahore Museum a new problem arose—that of a suitable building.

An Exhibition

In connection with local museums, Cleghorn's memorandum iterates⁵⁰ that interest be shown toward holding agricultural and manufacturing industries exhibitions in the Punjab, following beneficial results in South India. This exchange of 'models' and ideas initiated an exhibition culture within India and set forth a standard staging pattern within which each exhibition could remain unique by displaying distinctive local products. This exhibitionary prototype was adopted in the Punjab, which employed the template of the Madras Exhibition (1855) outlined in the latter's catalogue,⁵¹ which also contained a list of the main classes of objects exhibited including raw materials, machinery, and manufactures of the Madras Presidency and its neighbouring states. As evident

in other exhibitions around the world, prizes were on offer to articles of manufacture that demonstrated improvement in form and utility, evidenced superior workmanship, and identified new avenues of experimenting with and exploiting available resources.⁵² The main priority of exhibitions, as was the case with museums at this time, was avenues of profit—so how did this economic agenda influence the first Punjab Exhibition and the Lahore Museum's progress?

The Exhibition Committee set up in 1860 took three years to organise the first spectacle of the Punjab. A prize list⁵³ outlining the different object categories was circulated by a subcommittee in the form of a general prospectus to 'native chiefs and gentlemen' for their full participation in donating objects.⁵⁴ An example of contributions and interest by 'native gentlemen' was that of the Fakir⁵⁵ family of Lahore, an influential household whose ancestors, as high-ranking officials in Maharajah Ranjit Singh's government, had amassed an extensive collection of art, ornaments, and curiosities.⁵⁶ The organisers, knowing the benefits of maintaining good relations with local elite, contacted the Fakir family for objects related to Ranjit Singh's *Durbar* for the exhibition, since they had previously donated items to the Lahore Museum, including paintings and swords of French generals.⁵⁷ Other contributions came from local committees of various districts, government administrators, Thuggie School of Industry, Lahore Jail, and native princes—an altogether collaborative effort in showing the wealth of Punjab. The only museums to send objects were the Lahore Museum and the Amritsar Museum; the former contributed samples of silk, Bahawalpur *durrie*, straw shoes from China, women's caps, and article verses from Arabia. The objects collected were arranged into four sections: Raw Material, Manufactures, Machinery, and Fine Arts, with thirty-three classes of objects and each item labelled with the exhibitor's name, locality, district, and price (if for sale).⁵⁸ It must be noted that inclusion of products from outside Punjab were not taken to be disruptive; rather, they highlighted existing imports and trade routes from other provinces and countries (Baden-Powell 1868), thus mapping the Punjab's economic geography.

Despite long-term planning by the Exhibition Committee, when it came to the building, it was a hurried affair. A special building was constructed (illus. 49) on the later-named Exhibition Road near Anarkali to house what Percy Brown⁵⁹ describes as 'the vast number of exhibits which it was anticipated would be sent' (1994:17) to develop local arts and industries. The building was never intended to be permanent and so was hastily put up with the funds from local,⁶⁰ provincial, and imperial funds (Bahadur 1892:353); little else is known about the construction plans of the first purposely built exhibition building in Lahore.

The exhibition opened on January 20, 1864, with many commissioners, deputy commissioners, rajas, and nawabs in attendance; G. R. Elmslie, a British Administer in the Punjab (1858–1893), provides an itinerary for the occasion tainted by his own distaste for such *tamashas*:

The chief event at Lahore in the early part of 1864 was the opening of an Industrial Exhibition . . . [a] week of tamashas. The European visitors are principally located in a large camp in Anarkali. The native grandees are on the plain on north of the city. Tomorrow is fixed for the grand durbar or levee for the reception of the Native Princes, etc. . . . On Tuesday H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor gives a grand fete at Shalamar to all residents and visitors. On Wednesday the Exhibition is to be opened with all possible pomp. On Thursday come a grand review and ball. Friday, State visit to the city . . . but I would rather spend the holidays in the jungles than at the monster fetes and Revelries.⁶¹

According to Elmslie's description, the actual exhibition opening was a 'mild affair' in comparison to the peripheral ceremonies. However, the exhibition lasted until the first week of April 1864, with 25,027 tickets being sold⁶² and the highest daily attendance numbering 3,687 on February 10, when a great majority came from Amritsar by rail.⁶³ Soon after the exhibition closed, discussions began to decide the future of the exhibition hall. In a meeting on April 20, 1864, Sir Robert Montgomery proposed that half the building be used by the museum and the other half as a public hall, although the Exhibition Committee pointed out that the building needed a new roof, flooring, and proper drainage before it could be used as a museum.⁶⁴ For a few months, the building remained unoccupied, but following the Durbar of October 1864, the building was divided in half by a 'handsome double-screen of glass and carved wood' made at the Railway Workshops⁶⁵; one half was reroofed and refloored, to which some collections from the Lahore Museum were transferred. However, the museum required more space, and so the other half was also renovated for occupation, with the first half containing raw produce and natural history with an annexe of antiquities, and the second section displaying manufactured products, fine arts, ethnographic specimens, and coins.⁶⁶

The revamped Lahore Museum combined exhibition remnants with objects from the old museum to create an admixture that Baden-Powell, then curator,⁶⁷ notes contained surviving raw products and a number of models and some manufactured goods, as well as donations of inlaid furniture, Cambay agates, and fabrics from the Government of Bombay. This relocation created an opportunity for the museum to grow materially with new additions being purchased or contributed by various districts,⁶⁸ particularly for the departments of antiquities, natural history, and

ethnography. Antiquities, considered the most important acquisitions, of carved friezes and fragmentary sculptures from Yusafzai, were donated by such officers as Mr. F. H. Cooper, and natural history benefited from the retiring Lt. C. H. T. Marshall-Assistant Commissioner's loan of kangaroo rat, young llama, and orang-utan specimens. There were fossils from Spiti for the geological section, and in the ethnological department plans were discussed⁶⁹ to establish a Punjab tribal dress gallery based on Dr. Cayley's donation of specimens from Ladakh and Dr. Leitner's collection of dresses and other curiosities from Little Tibet and Daro country, which would strengthen interest in this area that 'a series of electro types from the casts of heads of various Himalayan tribes taken by M. M. Schelaginweit [*sic*] . . . had sparked.'⁷⁰

The variety and types of objects displayed in the museum were going beyond raw products and manufactures to include objects illustrating the people of India and their ways of living. One important stepping-stone in this overlap of inquiry and visual classification was the publication of John Forbes-Watson's⁷¹ eighteen-volume series *The Textile Manufactures and the Costumes of the People of India* in 1866, wherein fabric type, design, colour, and usage denoted regions of India and community types. When the Lahore Museum received a set, it was accompanied by 'rules for inspection' that were hung up next to the exhibited series. However, it would be assumptive to suggest that a clear strategy of display and interpretation of objects was underway; museum curators, despite interest, lacked accurate knowledge and still relied on conjecture, as Baden-Powell's comments on 'antiquities' reveal: 'The great bulk of these sculptures are . . . purely ornamental . . . others again endless repetitions of the Buddha, surrounded by his pupils—standing—seated—in the attitude of teaching and so forth. . . . And these, if described by competent persons, would probably throw some light on the history of Buddhism.'⁷²

The dilemma of 'competent persons' remained and affected museum displays, since it was impossible for one curator to be an expert on every collection. As Baden-Powell noted for bird specimens, such a dilemma created a stand-still in arrangement owing to his lack of ornithological knowledge, and so, like the Buddhist sculptures, this display remained simply ornamental.

This is not to say that the Lahore Museum was not taking shape; it was, and in 1866, the Governor of Punjab ordered that Rs. 200 per month be allocated for its workings. (Previously the museum had been supported by local funds with only the curator's salary paid by the government.⁷³) Interventions were also made to attract native visitors by informing them that the museum was open to the public; when the likes of the Maharajahs of Kashmir and Cabul [*sic*] visited, then there was expectation for object donations.⁷⁴ Despite the building remaining

unsatisfactory, with every part of the roof leaking and Baden-Powell describing it as a ‘damp and dark place’ (1869:522), it was being made more pleasant with ornamented colour stencilling around the arches and some glass cases commissioned for better display. The situation was challenging as collections became rapidly ‘interesting’ and ‘valuable’; however, disappointment and anxiety prevailed owing to lack of funds and government patronage.

A new direction with an influx of ideas for the Lahore Museum came in the 1870s, when John Lockwood Kipling came to Lahore. J. L. Kipling represents a key figure and moment in the history of the Lahore Museum, because it was through his vision that it gradually transformed from a material archive into an active institution implicated in craft reform and art education in India. J. L. Kipling trained under an apprenticeship, as a modeller and designer, at the pottery firm of Pinder, Bourne, and Company in Burslem (Stoke-on-Trent) and later moved down to London⁷⁵ to further his practical experience by joining the South Kensington Museum in 1861 as a sculptor/modeller, where his skills were utilised in decorating the museum’s new courts.⁷⁶ At this time, a drive to establish art schools in India was taking root, and competent persons were sought as heads. C. J. Erskine, a Bombay judge, while visiting England was on the lookout to ‘employ practising artist-craftsmen’ for the J. J. School of Art, and J. L. Kipling fitted the bill, landing his first job in India.

In April 1865, at the age of 28, J. L. Kipling, along with his wife, headed for Bombay and the J. J. School of Art. His opinion, on arrival, that Indian art schools were so far ‘vehicles of a kind of cultural imperialism in which misplaced models of western art were imposed on Indian students to the detriment of any training whatsoever in native techniques,’⁷⁷ revealed his future intentions. J. L. Kipling was placed in charge of decorative sculpture in marble, stone, and plaster, with his students’ work adorning much of Bombay’s colonial architecture, such as Victoria Terminus and Crawford Market. During his nine years in Bombay, J. L. Kipling began expounding his vision of Indian art education, borrowing from the ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement and South Kensington pedagogy.

In mid-nineteenth-century England, following the supremacy of Indian ornamental design at the 1851 Great Exhibition, debates and anxieties prevailed around the negative effects of the industrial revolution on the decorative arts and artisans’ guilds. These debates led to a set of reformers, including Henry Cole, Owen Jones, John Ruskin, and William Morris (Mitter 1992), to appear as art critics/museum men operating variously under the remit of the Arts and Crafts Movement, which venerated Indian design as epitomising the glorious past of British

industrial arts. In their resolve to protect ‘pristine’ craft communities/guilds from the onslaught of modernisation and inculcate ethics of design and public taste, they involved museums and art schools to disseminate their manifesto to craftsmen and art students while reeducating British society. Application of this ethos to India initially centred on salvaging craft traditions, but soon emphasis was equally placed on resultant trade benefits—Lahore’s museum and art school under J. L. Kipling were par excellence in this respect.

In February 1875, the same year that he was made a Fellow of Bombay University, J. L. Kipling shifted to Lahore to head the new art school, his ‘energetic and practical temperament’ attracting the Punjab Government,⁷⁸ and not long after he simultaneously held the position of Curator at the Lahore Museum. The art/craft debate was *the* underlying paradigm for J. L. Kipling’s work in India and influenced his activities at the art school and museum. For J. L. Kipling, the Lahore Museum was not secondary to the art school; rather, both were vital to the teaching and revival of ‘art’ envisioned by him and indicated further in his preference for the future school building, in agreement with Baden-Powell, to be constructed near the museum, since the latter was a ‘comprehensive “object book” of reference’⁷⁹ for students. Both institutions were to serve in rectifying the ‘coarseness and crudity of much modern work [which] shews [*sic*] only too plainly how salutary a study of the best old examples would be to the modern craftsmen.’⁸⁰ J. L. Kipling’s interventions aimed to focus on ‘patronage’ and protection of Indian craftsmen, manipulate public taste, and create consumer demand—all influences of the South Kensington model and the Arts and Crafts Movement rhetoric. This input was not simply ideological; central to it in a highly rudimentary way was the museum’s role in visualising ‘models’ and ‘samples’ that objectified this ideology and could be used to educate the craftsmen, students, and public about the merits of traditional design aesthetics.

This intertwining of the two institutions brought a new challenge to the Lahore Museum with a new set of consumers—the craftsmen. The appropriateness and state of the museum for this art/craft discourse under J. L. Kipling can be gleaned from a ‘guide’ he co-authored with T. H. Thornton (2002)⁸¹ for travellers wishing to visit the Punjab. The guide describes the museum as a ‘must see’ site, with the magnificent Zam-Zammah gun standing in front,⁸² for all visitors to the Punjab. The museum is systematically laid out for the reader, beginning with the visitor’s book and copies of Baden-Powell’s *Punjab Products* and *Punjab Manufactures* for those desiring additional information. The arts and manufactures of the province are reviewed in terms of artistic merit, with particular attention given to the chief valuables of the museum:

the sculptured remains from Yusafzai, whose value lay in ‘elucidating the obscure early history of the Buddhist faith’ (ibid.:79). This section also included ethnography, with weapons and accoutrements of ‘northern tribes’ said to be unlike those of medieval Europe and a collection of ‘Thibetan [*sic*] curiosities,’ including an image made from the ashes of a deceased Lama, the ever-present ethnographical heads donated by Messrs. Schlagintweit and Drs. Cayley and Leitner’s sartorial contributions—conspicuous among them a Tibetan Lama’s ‘richly ornamented and picturesque’ (ibid.) dress. Coins are mentioned, although principally stored in a strongbox with access granted on request to the curator, and protohistory came in the form of two finely finished ‘celts’ from Swat.

In the central aisle, the visitor would encounter a ‘grotesque series of portraits’ (ibid.:80) of Punjab princes and chiefs by a native artist and cases displaying manufactures such as lacquerware from Pakpattan, Kashmiri *papier-mâché*, and ivory inlay work from Hoshiarpur. A section on Ornaments is mentioned next; it contained a few characteristic examples with other cases exhibiting musical instruments, pottery, damascene-work from Gujarat and Sialkot likened to that of Italy, enamelled metal, Bahawalpur silks, rudely carved and hideously painted idols found in Lahore Fort, and displays of Kashmiri and Amritsari shawls exemplifying the highly important wool manufactures of the province. This eclecticism of the collections also led to many being identified as incomplete, inadequate, or imperfectly illustrated.

The guide completes its museum trail with the second part describing the raw materials of Punjab, with location and use value explained for various products such as coal, gypsum, rock salt, cotton, lead, and timbers, ending with a surprising section on the *Koh-i-Nur* model by Messrs. Olser that was exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851. The Lahore Museum was now materially fecund and especially significant as an object lesson on Punjab crafts, with the intention of prompting both visitors and students to query their aesthetic sensibilities while advertising local arts/crafts.

This period of the Lahore Museum is brought to life in a different manner by J. L. Kipling’s son, Rudyard Kipling, in *Kim* (1912).⁸³ It is worth examining the museum encounter in parentheses, because it reveals a very real base to the fiction and personal attachment for both Kiplings to the museum. Observing the museum’s images and his father’s activities must have influenced the words in the opening pages, when Kimball O’Hara takes his newfound curiosity—the Tibetan Lama, to the *Ajaib Ghar*/Wonder House/government’s house, a place with ‘no idolatry . . . only a sahib with a white beard’ (ibid.:13). Rudyard Kipling’s rendering of the museum in the Lama’s visit is reminiscent of his father’s guide:

Kim clicked round the self-registering turnstile; the old man followed and halted amazed. In the entrance-hall stood the larger figures of the Greco-Buddhist sculptures done, savants know how long since. . . . There were hundreds of pieces, friezes of figures in relief, fragments of statues and slabs crowded with figures that had encrusted . . . Buddhist *stupas* and *viharas* of the North Country and, dug up and labelled, made the pride of the museum. In open-mouthed wonder the lama turned to this and that, and finally checked in rapt attention before a large alto-relief representing a coronation or apotheosis of Lord Buddha.⁸⁴

The Lama, overcome with delight, is then directed by Kim to the sahib, who humbly introduces himself: 'Welcome, then, O lama from Tibet. Here be the images, and I am here . . . to gather knowledge' (ibid.:15). Rudyard Kipling, in eulogising his father as the benevolent curator who desires to share his 'knowledge' while simultaneously possessing 'the reverence of a devotee and the appreciative instinct of a craftsman' (ibid.:16), is alluding to the empathy J. L. Kipling felt toward the skills of Indian craftsmen, for whom he envisioned the Lahore Museum as a sanctuary: a place where tradition was depicted and safeguarded in the collections. J. L. Kipling's practical and published⁸⁵ work is replete with this ambition that elucidated crafts in terms of style and design, sometimes comparatively to familiar styles in Europe but always revering qualities of traditional Indian aesthetic.

For J. L. Kipling, the infiltration of mass-produced European goods into Indian markets also needed to be kept in check if indigenous craft techniques and design were to be salvaged. This 'degenerationist thesis' (Coombes 1994:61) sanctioned direct intervention by the British to act as 'educators' in India, although the ultimate benefit was for the imperial economy and commerce. J. L. Kipling's campaign to revive Indian crafts was introduced at the Mayo School of Art (MSA),⁸⁶ with instruction focusing on indigenous models of design. The earliest MSA reports show that students were employed in studying Indian design by drawing actual objects; for example, Muhammad Din is said to have made 'creditable pen-drawings of Kashmiri ewers in the museum.'⁸⁷ The museum's craft collections were implicit to this venture as they exposed students' eyes to the ideal form and trained their hands through drawing and manufacture. By 1879, students received instruction in drawing, modelling, carpentry, carpet design, decoration, wood engraving, photography, and lithography,⁸⁸ with immediate design inspiration being sought in the specimens on display at the Lahore Museum. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Lahore Museum had continued to maintain the division of artefacts into sections adopted from its previous setting; however, now, instead of representing an objectified census,

the collections were reappropriated through the meta-narrative of craft ideology and its desire to restore traditional design and improve Indian craft.

Alongside this intellectual rhetoric, expansion of the museum's collections had continued unabated with additions such as a Woodcock shot at Peshawar, coins, a rifle, timber specimens, a stone casket, specimens of female ant and scorpion, rice, indigo, and records of the geological and archaeological surveys of India.⁸⁹ One section that flourished more than others was the Yusafzai sculptures:⁹⁰ with over 800 duplicates in 1878 and new examples arriving, the museum had little idea of how to accommodate these superabundant riches, so suggestions to send duplicates to England were made.⁹¹ J. L. Kipling⁹² agreed that sculptures of historical and artistic value required exposure back 'home,' but he preferred sending casts to save on freight costs and to give MSA students practice in clay and plaster modelling. This is another prime example of how J. L. Kipling combined the workings of the two institutions in a symbiotic relationship, and it also demonstrates his manifest possessiveness toward the museum's collections and their future. In an interesting letter, J. L. Kipling argues for return-items in exchange from the likes of the Asiatic Society and European museums so that he could extend the Lahore Museum's boundary beyond the Punjab to introduce a more comparative and edifying aspect:

For while I deprecate attempts to make the Lahore Museum an *omnium gathereno* of the bric-a-brac of all countries I can hardly agree with General MacLagan that it should be entirely limited to the productions of the Punjab . . . to be fully instructive it should contain examples of all kinds of oriental art. . . . Already we have photographs from Madras and other places of India, Cambay agates from Bombay, terra-cotta figures from Oudh, marble idols of the baser sort from Poona, rococo alabaster vases and marble statues from Italy, steatite models from Agra, prints from England etc etc. . . . This class is almost certain to increase and it can easily be so arranged as not to clash or be confounded with things peculiar to the Punjab. It would certainly be much more useful if it contained . . . some good gold enamel and marble sculptures from Jeypore, specimens of the revered Sind pottery now made at Bombay School of Art, some good Bombay wood-carving, Chinese, Japanese and Madras cane and bamboo work, Persian illuminated M.S.S. and many more such objects to which one could take a student or craftsmen.⁹³

Apart from a geographical and comparative expansion of the collections, J. L. Kipling was advocating a greater degree of exchange between museums, art schools, and the various surveys/societies of India without abandoning core peculiarities of each provincial museum. J. L. Kipling's

ideas here are better understood if placed within the official scheme of things—namely, the Government of India's drive in the late 1880s to align museums specifically with the encouragement of industrial arts. This was the first and to some extent the only concerted effort made by the colonial government toward consolidating Indian museums in a practical manner. Under the umbrella of Industrial Arts, Museums, and Exhibitions, Resolution No. 239 of March 14, 1884⁹⁴ was drafted to better organise museums with purview to promoting trade and Indian industrial art. The objective was twofold: first, encouragement and assistance of local artisans and, second, advertising their work to the public by means of art museums, exhibitions, and art publications. This integrative approach built on the reactionary abhorrence of J. L. Kipling, among others, to the increasing influence of European goods and requirements in leading Indian crafts wayward. Such sentiments were no longer individualistic but supported by official proclamation to halt deterioration, as the resolution declared: 'Indian art is already being led into new paths to meet European tastes . . . that it imitates with little or no discrimination, and . . . readily follows ignorant guidance.'⁹⁵

The Government of India's interest in addressing issues of better design and increasing awareness of Indian artistic products within and beyond India was to generate trade expansion. Advance onto the global capitalist stage, with its transnational flows of objects and knowledge aided by imperialism, was now the focus for museums rather than simply visualising India; although this shift relied on the knowledge base accrued from earlier explorations and collecting of India. Museums were now appropriately given the guise of 'economic' or 'trade' museums, an essential denominational shift spurred on by these global ventures that aimed to push further afield India's trade frontier and enter new economic markets such as Australia,⁹⁶ while nationally reestablishing demand for local goods and educating the 'isolated and ignorant' craftsmen. Within museums, this craft reformation first urged museum authorities to act as middle-men and reach out to local craftsmen, visit them, provide advice on design, and gain orders by advertising their manufactures in museums,⁹⁷ and, second, to influence public taste—local and global—through exchange of duplicate specimens, exhibitions, and textual matter between Indian and foreign museums.

Museums, as part of this scheme, transformed from 'benign' archives into active participants as 'trade-museums or sample rooms'⁹⁸ within the larger objective of economic expansion.⁹⁹ Although the emphasis on trade and commerce was not new, it coincided with one of J. L. Kipling's own reasons behind educating craftsmen: to give them economic stability, thus satisfying his own and the empire's ideals. The assurances and willingness of Resolution 239 to reindigenise Indian crafts found full

compliance in museums, since stability was possible through control of which objects were displayed and how they were interpreted (on the curator's side).

Resolution 239 clearly affected museums by redirecting their attention and activities toward issues pertaining to art/craft and applied a second museum model, derived from South Kensington, onto the existing one—the Indian Museum's encyclopaedic organisation. This prioritised industrial art collections, with each specimen collected being numbered and displayed in a uniform manner across all institutions to assist collectors, the purchasing public, and the exchange of specimens. Specifically, a select repository of approved samples that excluded debased versions was to be displayed in each 'art' museum to motivate local craftsmen toward producing goods of higher quality that could compete in local and global markets.

The Lahore Museum had few problems adjusting and in a way was ideal, since it possessed a large arts and manufactures section, which J. L. Kipling was using in design instruction at the MSA. In fact, the craft reformation model provided by Resolution 239 was to some extent already in existence at the Lahore Museum under J. L. Kipling, and so there was little alteration in the institution's basic *modus operandi*. Expansion of object collections that presented good design continued through the purchase of enamelled jewellery and *hookay* as well as a contribution of silk manufactures in 1892–1893,¹⁰⁰ and in the following year through items from the Punjab Exhibition that included copper sprinklers from Lahore, a painted bow with three arrows, wooden combs, silver toys, and spinning wheels.¹⁰¹ Concentration on the industrial arts did not mean that other sections of the museum, such as economic or geological, were redundant, since the notion of art and design was overbearingly that of the sumptuous kind and so incorporated the intermediate production processes that transformed raw material into a finished product.

Museums also benefited from the Resolution's desire for art publications, and the Punjab Government commissioned a systematic industrial survey with annual monographs on specific art manufactures to be published either in the *Journal of Art*¹⁰² or as official reports that were circulated and exchanged between museums and art schools. These monographs were a useful source of information, since their characteristic holistic approach documented art from supply of raw materials to the process of manufacture, commercial enterprise, enumeration of goods, and wages and profits, along with the caste of worker—Indian craftsmen became objectified and classified in monograph illustrations as one material component of art. Monographs even emerged as byproducts of local inquiry—for example, *A Monograph on Trade and Manufactures*

in Northern India (1880) by William Hoey, Officiating City Magistrate, who on special duty as Licence Tax Officer in Lucknow (1879–1880) wrote:

I soon found that the only safe method of assessing a Licence Tax was to study the trade and manufactures, the arts and dealings of the people with whom my duty brought me into contact. . . . I took up sample cases of all trades, dealings, and manufactures, noted the processes of manufacture, principles of dealing, and trade practices, and endeavoured to form an approximate notion of the probable profits of each business.¹⁰³

More than the text and visuals, the samples of raw materials and manufacture accompanying the monographs were of significance for museums¹⁰⁴ because they helped judge local work, particularly the extent of deterioration.

The Lahore Museum's easy integration into this trade/craft commercialisation/ideology as a theatre of taste, instruction, and preservation, although a politico-economic motivated move, furthered J. L. Kipling's personal ambitions for craft reform in India; however, the Resolution also formed a new cycle between European and Indian museums. Objects that had originally migrated to Europe for exhibitions such as the 1851 Great Exhibition and ended up in museums, now returned as an art education ideology to direct the future of Indian craft by reinstating indigenous models of design and production.

It may seem that Indian museums, like the Lahore Museum, had become embroiled in the fictional desire for purity of design/form to enhance trade and colonial profit, but the grip of 'curiosities' was difficult to shake off. In 1891–1892, additions included a collection of coins purchased from Mr. C. J. Rodgers, noted by J. L. Kipling as the most complete and valuable in India,¹⁰⁵ a collection of shells from the Andaman Islands gifted by Lady Lyall, and some sculptural fragments from Dr. Auriel Stein's visit to Ranigat in Yusafzai. The next year it was more coins, manufactured silk donated by the Director of Land and Agriculture—Punjab Government, enamelled jewellery, musical instruments, and the purchase of clay models of Muhammadan prayers, a *Tazia* (models of Karbala carried during Muharram processions), a funeral procession, and a marriage procession.¹⁰⁶ This period of the Lahore Museum fused two museum models—the encyclopaedic with the art/craft reform—and although at times it is not easy to delineate a dominant mode or extract a hybrid, it seems that the Lahore Museum successfully juggled the colonial fantasy of salvaging Indian craft traditions while concurrently commodifying them. Crucially, this activity also signalled another change in the museum's persona, when it would renovate itself as a Jubilee Museum.

The Jubilee Institute

On May 5, 1893, J. L. Kipling retired and was replaced by F. H. Andrews (1893–1899) as curator, neatly mirroring a change of location for the Lahore Museum. The new setting was part of an institute built just across from the exhibition building and opposite the University Senate Hall. The new building was financed by funds raised throughout Punjab Province during commemorations of Queen Victoria's Jubilee in February 1887 and conceived as a complex that was to include the Lahore Museum, a library, lecture rooms,¹⁰⁷ and MSA, with room for future expansion. On February 3, 1890, Prince Albert Victor laid down the foundation stone for the building designed by the architect Sardar Sahib Bhai Ram Singh—a member of the first MSA batch of students. Constructed by Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram, then Executive Engineer of Lahore, it was completed in late 1893, in time for the Punjab Exhibition that December, as the Victoria Jubilee Institute and opened to the public in 1894. The Jubilee Institute, or simply Institute, as it was popularly referred to, finally gave the Lahore Museum a purpose-built permanent home in which to firmly establish itself, and the Punjab had an ideal museum building that boasted the architectural grandeur of any modern museum, something Hargreaves and Markham bemoaned as lacking: '[India has] but few ideal museum buildings—few cool spacious inviting temples of the Muses such as one sees in many American and European Cities' (1936:21).

Although J. L. Kipling retired before the Institute was completed, he was integral to its formation—first, indirectly through the work of Bhai Ram Singh, an ex-student of his and later Principal of MSA (1909–1913).¹⁰⁸ Second, in his last annual report for the museum,¹⁰⁹ J. L. Kipling describes the near completion of the new museum's interiors with designs, moulds, and casts in embossed plaster being prepared to decorate the doorways between galleries and how '[t]he surfaces of Museum walls afford[ed] an excellent field for the practice of decorative art [for students]' (ibid.). This comment nicely harks back to the ornamentation of the South Kensington Museum, where J. L. Kipling and others had been responsible for decorating the new courts.¹¹⁰ J. L. Kipling also instituted reorganisation of the museum's collections, especially the Buddhist antiquities and the positioning of the Stupa that was fixed on a drum of brickwork to ensure that the relief work was visible at eye level. However, the majority of the collections were transferred after J. L. Kipling's departure, owing to the new building suffering from the old 'evil' of leaking roofs.¹¹¹ Once the shift was made, the redundant old building was turned into a municipal market, catering primarily to the European residents, known as Tollinton Market, and the old galleries now exhibited different commodities—of grocers, general

merchants, and, around the back, poultry. Although this move marked the end of J. L. Kipling's time in Lahore, his ideological influences as well as material additions remain iconic in the development and history of the Lahore Museum and art education in India.

The Lahore Museum's new era was earmarked by continuous adjustment, rearrangements, and reclassification, but first a Committee of Management was organised to handle the Institute's affairs. They drew up a set of Rules and Regulations¹¹² that stipulated the Lahore Museum would include sections devoted to art, archaeology, ethnology, technology, natural history, and economic products under the control of the Institute's Honorary Secretary (position occupied by the curator). This initial reorganisation spanned several years, with Percy Brown (1899–1908), the next curator, reporting that 'Since [1894] . . . the work of fitting up the Museum with suitable glass cases, and the arrangement and classification of the specimens according to the most approved methods . . . is now nearing completion.'¹¹³ It is unclear how the museum was arranged, although Percy Brown's floor-plan¹¹⁴ shows four main galleries, with Industrial Arts occupying the most space; however, subsections must have existed and been added when necessary, to accommodate the various sections authorised by the committee. This reordering also benefited MSA students, because the Lahore Museum was now following the South Kensington Museum's 'pattern book' approach that Percy Brown deemed visually more beneficial to artisans.¹¹⁵

The Lahore Museum continued to acquire new objects that either were interesting or would complete a collection. The 1912–1913¹¹⁶ annual report records how a representative collection of Nepal's brass work—deities and worship utensils—was purchased from a Nepalese trader, with a new case made to properly display and tout them. The museum sustained this materialistic accumulation by selling unwanted objects to fund new purchases as budgets remained tight.¹¹⁷ This recycling then fed the museum's fervour for unique specimens and objects in need of 'rescue,' such as Indian costumes said to be becoming 'rarer every day.'¹¹⁸ In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, modes of collecting shifted away from primary reliance on survey activities and incorporated museum officer tours and buying from traders passing through Lahore. The effect of this gradual accretion was a materially claustrophobic Lahore Museum, and so plans for new galleries were made.¹¹⁹ However, increased space should not be equated with order and successful management here, since the fear of disorder prevailed for each successive curator, yet this situation was not peculiar to the Lahore Museum but an affliction for most Indian museums and obliged action at an all-India level, as suggested by the archaeologist Dr. Ph. Vogel.¹²⁰

It was at the 1907 Conference on Archaeology and Museums that the first India-wide forum to discuss museums took place, with a number of resolutions¹²¹ being passed. The overall rhetoric echoed the need for increased centralisation of museum communication and practices around the Indian Museum, which could offer training to provincial, presidency, and state museum staff in areas such as collection management and organisation and help to set up a systematic exchange network for duplicates and reproductions while promoting uniformity across museums. In terms of publications, the Conference suggested a Technical Serial, similar to the memoirs of the different ‘Surveys of India’ but incorporating aspects of the ‘pattern book’ to replace the exhaustive *Industrial Art Monographs* that were in English and so of little use to Indian craftsmen. The degree of actual implementation within Indian museums is difficult to assess, but some effects were visible at the Lahore Museum following Percy Brown’s transfer to Calcutta as Principal of the School of Art in 1908, when B. Mouat-Jones (1908–1909) took over the position of curator, briefly succeeded by G. A. Wathen (1909–1911).

The Lahore Museum at this time needed a committed curator, and Lionel Heath (1912–1928) emerged on the scene; after J. L. Kipling, he held the longest tenure at the Lahore Museum and MSA—the position of Curator/Principal still remained conjoined. Lionel Heath replaced G. A. Wathen at the Lahore Museum on April 12, 1912 and praised the latter for having brought about great improvement during his time in the general arrangement of the museum, especially in zoology, and, with the help of Mouat-Jones in the Industrial Section, ‘produc[ing] order out of chaos by an entire rearrangement of the [mineral] collection in new cases’¹²²—perhaps an effort to apply some of the 1907 Conference’s resolutions. Lionel Heath’s confession that he had no academic degree or published work of official character but had ‘parallel qualifications’ for an artist,¹²³ made sure that ‘art’¹²⁴ remained on the Lahore Museum’s agenda in the early part of the twentieth century, and one of his first duties was to attend the second Museums Conference held in Madras January 15–17, 1912.

The Conference, summoned by the Department of Education in India, invited heads of local museums, government and representatives of native states, and those holding a direct interest in museums.¹²⁵ Lord Carmichael, Governor of Madras, in his opening address complimented museum workers by recognising: ‘You help to increase the sum of human knowledge and this is perhaps as worthy an object as any man can set before himself.’¹²⁶ Although the main symposium topic was Management of Museums, an equal focus was given to museum education, in particular the importance of visualising ‘historical studies’ through archaeological collections. Museums, it was suggested could excel in provisioning a

history of Indian Civilisations as well as other subjects through practical means of good chronological arrangement, labelling in English and vernaculars, cataloguing for dilettante and expert alike, and oral tuition/guidance by the curator in lectures, gallery tours, and demonstrations. Lionel Heath, in connection with this educational drive, considered the possibility of introducing Student Days, which would allow students to be satisfactorily guided around the museum without ‘crowds of loiterers.’¹²⁷ Museums were now gaining the responsibility of visually educating the public in a manner more effective and accessible than formal instruction that was to be manifested through professional management and proactive museum staff spearheaded by the curator, who was now administrator and expert.

It seems that this symposium advanced the groundwork of the 1907 Conference in trying to think about museums pragmatically and aimed for results that were squarely public oriented. However, this level of museum discourse was short-lived; no conferences took place after 1912, possibly owing to scant funds, and so Indian museums lacked debate/interaction at an all—India level. This is not to say the two conferences (1907 and 1912) were without consequence; in fact, they allowed new links and exchange practices to forge and more significantly embodied and instigated progress for Indian museums from their earlier roles as survey or art museums to acting as pseudo-public museums and finally becoming modern public museums. Lionel Heath took heed of the suggestions made at the 1912 Conference, and various developments to improve the educational capacity of the Lahore Museum appear to be a direct manifestation of this.

The *Report on the Working of the Central Museum, Lahore, for the Year 1913–1914* shows that the museum physically grew by acquiring a new gallery and preparing cases to display both new collections and recategorised objects. This physical verification and reordering concurrently engendered textual knowledge for some collections in the form of catalogues: Mr. R. B. Whitehead’s *Coins Catalogue* was in press, and S. N. Gupta (Vice Principal—MSA) had classified all the pictures and was occupied with writing notes, labels, and a catalogue intended to add ‘educational value,’ while Mr. Hargreaves was struggling to complete a catalogue for the Buddhist sculptures hindered by ‘official work.’ A lasting impression of the 1912 Conference at the Lahore Museum was this exact shift toward provisioning an educational experience for visitors, especially students from schools and colleges; as Lionel Heath stated: ‘The best and most legitimate purpose a museum can serve is to encourage student visitors . . . [and so] hope to gradually get a larger number of intelligent visitors among the people. I am encouraging the School of Art students to use the Museum for drawing and painting.’¹²⁸

Attracting the educated then meant improving the calibre of visitors and increasing public interest but also justifying demand for assistance/donations to bolster galleries such as the Zoological Section. This public education impetus introduced a new rationale for the Lahore Museum's existence, whereby the colonial self focused on improving/educating the Indian Other.

By 1917, the Lahore Museum's external façade was also being modified, with gates and a balustrade wall erected to enhance its appearance, while the Zam-Zammah gun was given pride of place on a platform on the Mall Road.¹²⁹ This interest in creating an educational public institution meant that the art/craft facet was becoming a backdrop and lucidly reflects the extent to which this ethos was reliant on the belief, enthusiasm, and work—despite Resolution 239—of such people as Baden-Powell and J. L. Kipling. Lionel Heath thus represents a transitional figure who balanced the two types of museum education—public and art/craft, by straddling the, at times vexed, position of Principal-de-facto Curator.

Dealing with the art/craft aspect, Lionel Heath set up a Gallery of Punjab Art and Craft hoping it would form 'a standard for the assistance of the provincial craftsman with the opportunity of bringing his work before the public.'¹³⁰ Although reminiscent of J. L. Kipling, Heath's focus was not blind replication of an older discourse but an astute attempt to modernise the art/craft ethos in response to changing tastes whilst not failing the craftsmen and their livelihoods. A crucial modification was taking place at the Lahore Museum in relation to craftsmen and their work, where it was not enough for the museum to be a 'store of pure samples' or a 'pattern book'; the museum needed to continually renew and adapt its thinking, as Heath notes:

a Museum founded for the benefit of the arts and crafts of the province is doing only part of its duty in exhibiting the old arts and crafts . . . however interesting to the student and connoisseur . . . by reason of changed tastes and requirements [is] of little practical help to the craftsmen . . . [who are] forced to . . . [copy] indifferent examples of western crafts.¹³¹

Essentially, Heath wanted to modernise the museum and MSA, believing 'that it is better to have a live art than a dead tradition . . . to influence and direct the change in public taste, and not try and stop it.'¹³² Lionel Heath was attempting to keep alive the remains of the ingrained art/craft ideology at the Lahore Museum by updating them for modern ideals/tastes, and from the 1920s onward this attempt centred on revisionism and modernisation.

To offer a more edifying experience, the Lahore Museum reshuffled/re-presented its collections, replaced cases with those offering

better protection to objects, and disposed of redundant objects such as agricultural and forest products.¹³³ Increased educational value of displays was achieved through the introduction of vernacular labelling,¹³⁴ and eventually all labels were written in English, Gurmukhi, Hindi, and Urdu so that the Indian public, particularly the literate common villager, would come to know the so-called proper significance of the exhibited objects; to this effect, one popular publication—*The Buddha Story in Stone* (n.d.) by Mr. Hargreaves—was also translated into Urdu. The colonial management also added new educational subjects to the popular Lantern Lectures and began selling mementoes—guides, catalogues, duplicate coins, photographs-*cum*-postcards (reproduced as panchromatic postcards following the example of the British Museum and Dresden Gallery), so visitors could take home a tangible souvenir of their visit.¹³⁵

The Lahore Museum was evolving outward rather than being introspective in its knowledge production and consumption; it was reaching out to communicate with its diverse visitors by accepting its public responsibilities as outlined by S. N. Gupta:¹³⁶ ‘The Museum is an extremely interesting institution and should always win the affections of the public. It should be constantly improving and made up to date as it has an educational outlook of great value and plays a very important part in the dissemination of knowledge and culture.’¹³⁷ However, we must note that all this activity following the 1912 Conference was hampered severely as usual by pitiful funds. Lionel Heath alerts the Punjab Government of this predicament when he regretfully points to the incompleteness of galleries and the want of better display: ‘It is sad to record that this Museum, which gives pleasure and education to half a million people yearly, has still to await the beneficiary grant of funds so urgently required for the proper display and preservation of the collections.’¹³⁸

Despite this despondency, the advances made at the Lahore Museum under Lionel Heath cannot be ignored: the Gallery Plan for 1929¹³⁹ shows the extent of expansion undertaken with the addition of new galleries: Graeco-Buddhist, Indo-Persian Paintings, and Græco-Bactrian and Mughal Coins. In 1928, Lionel Heath was relieved of the curator’s position after sixteen years, and this marked another transition not only for the Lahore Museum but also for the museum service in the Punjab as a whole, since he was the penultimate European to hold the position. Before moving on to the involvement of elite Indians as museum practitioners, we note some of Lionel Heath’s reflections on the Lahore Museum at the end of his career.

Heath’s article *The Lahore Museum in 1929* (1994)¹⁴⁰ highlights some of his parting thoughts; he alludes to the lack of patronisation of the museum by public bodies and private individuals, in terms of money and *objects d’art*, as disappointing and surprisingly praises the

government, stating: ‘if the museums had not been maintained by Government, it is certain that most of the valuable collections now existing in every province would have left the country to enrich foreign museums or private collections’ (ibid.:19–20). He also makes it clear that one deterrent to a good educational display and learning experience was congested collections, and he hoped that the influence of modern museum management and arrangement techniques proposed to the Punjab Government would eliminate superfluous exhibits and introduce a ‘systematic exhibiting of all specimens . . . to give instruction and pleasure in place of the bored confusion of thought [among visitors]’ (ibid.:21). Lionel Heath linked the future of the Lahore Museum, a place that for him held the glories of an Indian past now lost, to modern museum practices—but perhaps he should have also included Indian curators.

THE LAHORE MUSEUM IN INDIAN HANDS

Other than as officiating, no Indian had held the post of curator at the Lahore Museum until July 14, 1928, when Dr. K. N. Sita Ram was given the first full-time position and the dual post of MSA Principal-*cum*-Museum Curator was finally abolished (ibid.), although the Museum Committee retained close links with the MSA. After a probationary period, the position was made permanent, once a certain level of competency was demonstrated and assessed by the MSA Principal. This division of roles was deemed necessary for the Lahore Museum to progress, as Lionel Heath had made unambiguously clear in a letter: ‘Owing to the long period of part-time Curators with little leisure in which to improve the arrangement of the many collections; the crying need of the Museum is for a better technical and educational display of Exhibits.’¹⁴¹

The creation of a separate full-time curator’s role aimed to rectify this need, and before leaving Lionel Heath had made plans for this and even semitrained Sita Ram by showing him how to create an ideal exhibit, specifying: ‘I have repeatedly insisted upon the necessity of . . . similar artistic and educational display [techniques].’¹⁴² The figure of Sita Ram stands exemplary of the educated Indian who could be trained to become curator: a Sanskrit scholar with interests in Hindu history, religion, and mythology but lacking somewhat the practical ability for museum arrangement—something Lionel Heath had seen wanting in India generally. Sita Ram was initially placed under the supervision of S. N. Gupta, who it was hoped would impart the practical fundamentals. This significant juncture marks an increased visibility of Indians in the museum service and so needs a brief examination before we further pursue the historical narrative, since this was not a chance happening but a calculated move by colonial authorities.

The debate around Indians within the museum service was not officially new; it had been aired by Dr. Annandale of the Indian Museum in a discussion on museums at the 1911 Orientalists Conference.¹⁴³ Dr. Annandale had expressed willingness to teach ‘any man of average intelligence’ from local museums the work at the Indian Museum, which possessed a favourable environment and offered superior training in comparison to other institutions in India.¹⁴⁴ This opportunity opened up a space for the colonised to occupy positions of authority and agency rather than be simply exhibited; however, we should remember that not *all* Indians were suitable; only those with ‘average intelligence’ or ‘second sight’ (Prakash 1999:34) were considered, and this preference acted as an entry control mechanism.

A ‘second sight’ (ibid.) was the Western training of elite Indians that instilled in them the benefits of a modern/rational outlook and a scientific vision that had been the preserve of superior colonial exploits. The objective in filtering this mind set/vision of Indian society and culture was to reform, modernise, and alter local frames of reference through the rhetoric of progress and science, with the colonial educational system preparing elite Indians for employment in colonial bureaucracy and modern professions, including the museum service. However, the emergence of Western-educated Indians within museums rather than allowing local agency and insight to enter the institution created mere clones of the coloniser, assisted by the lack of resistance from the Other.¹⁴⁵ The problem lay in the fact that Indian subjects with second sight aligned themselves with the colonisers by differentiating from the subalterns, who in their colonially conditioned minds needed to be enlightened with scientific instruction and education (Prakash 1999). In the early twentieth century, museums were becoming complex spaces that now included three types of participants—the colonials, elite Indians, and subalterns—and for the colonial museum project *some* success of the ‘civilizing mission’ that had been associated so deeply with public museums in Europe (Bennett 1995) was at least gained in the construction of employable modern Indian subjects.

Returning to the Lahore Museum, Sita Ram, following Lionel Heath’s induction, instigated immediate changes with new galleries, adequate labelling, elimination of ‘unworthy’ collections,¹⁴⁶ and guided tours in English and vernacular explaining the ‘cultural and aesthetic values of some chief exhibits being introduced.’¹⁴⁷ These ‘modernisation’¹⁴⁸ efforts are recorded in annual reports under the section head Work Done By Museum and in the main refer to activities pertaining to ‘proper’ museum methods that were progressive and informative. The extent to which this work was ‘proper’ can be garnered from S. N. Gupta’s comments on Sita Ram’s probationary period. Reminiscent of past attempts at change/development, the official

discourse presents a smooth paradigm, whereas matters on the ground offer a different reality. Although Lionel Heath had previously alluded to Sita Ram's disinterest in aspects of display and museum management, he had hoped that eventually Sita Ram would make a suitable curator; and from the Lahore Museum's annual reports, this would seem to be case. Yet S. N. Gupta's assessments paint a picture full of disappointment and frustration bordering on personal attack: his remarks on Sita Ram's plans for future development of the Lahore Museum are dismissed as ill-founded and flawed. Sita Ram's competence to 'create an educative and artistic atmosphere in the Museum'¹⁴⁹ was being questioned by his mentor, who saw him as lacking initiative and being impractical and who bitterly suggests: 'scholarship alone will not make him a very useful Curator.'¹⁵⁰ These deficiencies are similar to those expressed by colonial administrators when museums were being introduced to India, and a 'practical enquiring mind' was sought. S. N. Gupta's evaluation of Sita Ram's work is haunted by an uneasy relationship between the two men, with Gupta even accusing Sita Ram of creating an 'unwholesome atmosphere of a pawn broker's shop'¹⁵¹ at the museum.

Becoming modern under Indian charge induced teething problems at Lahore Museum, but, then, this situation should not really be a surprise. Since the very first museums in India, this was the case: an illusion of control and management was projected up front, while behind the scenes there was a struggle to cope with the material excess of India and formulate comprehensive collections and narratives based on shifting colonial needs from knowledge, art, and trade to education. Sita Ram, then, was not an idiosyncratic figure presenting an abnormal lack in museum expertise; the presence of museum-mindedness in curators had always been a problem but perhaps was more apparent in Sita Ram's work, since it was officially judged as part of professionalisation. Despite S. N. Gupta seeing Sita Ram as a handicap to the Lahore Museum's advancement toward becoming 'the foremost cultural institution in the province,'¹⁵² Sita Ram did attain permanent curatorship.

In 1932, Sita Ram conducted a survey tour of the Kangra Valley and the Plains of Kurukshetra, obtaining a number of objects with historical and artistic value, and during August 1934, he travelled to the British Museum, an exposure that must have helped fulfil both his own and the Lahore Museum Committee's desire for gallery rearrangement along 'improved lines.'¹⁵³ This change of attitude meant finding new avenues to fund the improvements, and so from April 1, 1932, a nominal fee of one *anna* was introduced at the behest of the committee. Sita Ram invested his newfound disposition in promoting the 'ideal museum,' which for him no longer represented a place of research but a space of historic, archaeological, and artistic education.¹⁵⁴ Slowly Sita Ram filled the role

of a modern museum professional as envisaged by both Lionel Heath and S. N. Gupta, becoming preoccupied with the practicalities of creating an educational institution. It would seem that elite Indians finally took on board the exhibitionary second sight necessary for museum work spurred on by criticism from Indians themselves and direct contact with the European model. Sita Ram epitomises this transition and sets the path for the last few years of British Indian museums.

On March 28, 1942, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Zafar Hasan OBE became curator of the Lahore Museum and promptly strategised a complete sectional check for the museum. In its eighty-seven year history, this was the first time an attempt had been made to draw up a systematic inventory of the collections, which simultaneously provided an opportunity to assess the museum's evolution over the years with its several phases of expansion and reorganisation; in the *Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1942–1943* the museum is said to be divided into fifteen sections, including Numismatics; Art; Manuscripts; Gandhara Sculptures; Indian Antiquities; Inscriptions; Gallery of Central Asia; Islamic Arts and Crafts of India; Textiles; Pottery; Prehistoric Gallery; Arms and Armours; Models; Industrial, Agricultural, and Forest Section; and Miscellaneous Antiquities. During his short curatorship, Hasan was interested primarily in producing an inventory of the numerous objects accumulated at the museum, although whether this was completed is not evident. However, the gradual appropriation of modern museum practices envisaged at the conferences for Indian museums is definitely palpable, even if through trial and error.

Before Indian museums took on postcolonial identities with Independence from the British in 1947 (Chapter 2), their fundamental search for colonial order, knowledge, and trade since inception, which had guided the Lahore Museum, was now singularly focused on educating the local public on the history and culture of the Punjab. Coupled to this was the desire to instil in Indian society an appreciation for the museum as an institution of knowledge and social progress, although in reality regret was expressed at the public's continuing inability to participate in a 'proper' style; it would seem that some types of Indian vision were less conceding (Chapter 4). The Lahore Museum, like other Indian museums, faced these paradoxes, but as 1947 approached, new game plans were emerging with a different set of politically charged individuals at the ready to replace the colonials with their own nationalist ideologies.

IMPERIAL MUSEUM SPIRIT AND THE TRINITY OF THE LAHORE MUSEUM

The Lahore Museum, introduced in the first few pages with a peek into its collections, can now I hope be identified not just as a 'museum' or a

museum in the Other but rather as an institution that emerged out of a specific historicised prism directed by a distinctive culture—that of colonialism. The narrative I have recounted has attempted to unveil the material and cultural interactions between the coloniser and the colonised that affected Indian society through the introduction of colonial museums, which so far have not been given due regard in the examination of colonial culture or museum history. Despite advancement in critical reevaluation of colonial and historical emergence of the public museum (see works by Bennett 1988, 1995 and Coombes 1994), the museum context in relation to colonial India remains, with a few exceptions, largely side-lined (for example, see Durrans 2007, Guha-Thakurta 2004, and K. Singh 2009 for museums and Hoffenberg 2001, 2004 and Mathur 2007 for exhibitions). Barringer and Flynn (1998) point to this neglect in postcolonial work, arguing that research has not fully engaged with the role that museums and their material artefacts played in expounding and sustaining colonial ideology and imagination, an aspect this chapter has tried to redress. To some extent, this absence is surprising, since India's colonial past reveals an active appropriation of its material culture by Orientalists, collectors, explorers, traders, officials, and eventually colonial 'museologists,' as Pelizzari notes: 'India stands as a very particular case in colonial studies. It was brought under British control at the very moment when developments in the science, technology, scholarly disciplines, and commerce made available the means to systematically study and exploit its highly complex cultural heritage along with its natural resources' (2002:14).

In India, museum representations were a product of colonial authority's drive to discover, survey, collect, analyse, and symbolically construct images of culture and society to serve its own needs. Despite the practice and discourse around museums being ambivalent, it was possible for colonialism to disguise any uncertainty behind the illusion of control and possession by exhibiting India based on colonial ontological categories, thus silencing the Other through British command of representational authority. India was therefore objectified and reordered many times as a set of visual narratives in museum and exhibition displays, but ultimately these were always open to manipulation by visitors ([Chapter 4](#)).

The collecting and exhibiting of India (or parts of India) in museums were an attempt to miniaturise and visualise the colony so that it was conceptually available at a glance to the colonial power as a comprehensive and total 'knowledge,' particularly after the Mutiny in 1857. However, Indian artefacts had been collected since the early seventeenth century as political symbols during the early period of Company Rule; Richard Davis (1994) records this form of collecting—namely, looting—that transformed objects into overtly political symbols as exemplified in

Seringapatam following the British defeat of Tipu Sultan in 1799, where objects became trophies of war, were treated as commodities, or ended up displayed in museums (Tipu's tiger can still be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum). However, in the mid-nineteenth century, a change took place in the scale and urgency of collecting, which proliferated through organised government surveys at provincial and district level. This fervour to collect was helped by an increase in the number of travellers who picked up curiosities and antiquities as they discovered parts of India, as well as by initiatives of early museum curators to explore their local areas and exchange duplicates with other institutions in the emerging museum networks. The colonial government took a keen interest in survey activity as it craved more knowledge for efficient governance of India, so museums from the mid-nineteenth century acted as centralised institutions where objects/collections were deposited for experts to classify into orders of modern disciplines and plot India as a materialised knowledge grid, much like an artefactual census (see Cohn 1996).

India as a colony was much easier to control and imagine within the four walls of a museum than in reality, since collections could be classified to evince any objectified order of reality. The desire for objective reality was central to exhibiting practices of modern European museums (see Pearce 1995) that operated under the overarching idea of progress as demonstrated by artefactual evidence; likewise, within India objects were being utilised to this end, becoming at some stage in their lives what Krystoff Pomian (1990) calls 'semiophores.' Decontextualised Indian objects fed the colonial imagination's variously constructed images of India's antiquity, ethnology, geology, natural history, trade, and art. One must also realise that this visualising practice simultaneously reflected an image of the colonials themselves, so that collecting impulses and museum displays revealed the colonisers' mindset in their exhibitionary constructions, which were trying to possess the Other through objects (Baudrillard 1996). Although the colonial self was not on display in the museum per se as a domineering image/discourse, it operated behind the scenes without much recourse to itself, but its authority was manifest in the ability to collect and author grand truths and meta-narratives of the Other in museum collections and displays.

In trying to avert a simple narrative of colonial dominance, I have engaged the ambivalence and uncertainty that surrounded colonial museology in India by examining the intimate interaction between museum rhetoric and practice. My focus on the Lahore Museum aptly illustrates the negotiations between colonial ideology and praxis in development of the museum trinity—*Baradari*, Exhibition, and Jubilee Institute. Illuminating disjunctures revealed the underlying fragility of what is thought to be a robust institution—disjunctures not apparent in

the displays, which retained an authoritative aura, did become evident in the everyday workings of the museum and in the way administrators and curators tried to maintain a façade of systematic organisation despite the institution being precariously positioned closer to disorganisation. Manifold reasons contributed in creating this situation, including a lack of museum experts, inadequate classification, inappropriate collecting practices, and shortage of space and funds, all of which were regularly voiced by those in charge. Yet, one other contributing factor that is crucial here was that of cultural proximity—physical and conceptual. I refer here to the fact that the material culture on display and the colonial framework utilised to construct new visions of Indian society did not have sufficient distance for colonial perceptions of India to totally crystallise and dismiss local ideas. Johannes Fabian's term *allochronism* (1991:198) comes to mind, whereby he refers to a denial of cotemporality that allows representational dominance to settle in as a form of visual dictatorship. However, in India the opposite took place: the Other was not in another country but there occupying the same lived space. It was a menace (Chapter 4).

Colonial museums also suffered from insecurity in relation to museums in England, and there was a constant drive to emulate the museum structure of European institutions; replication was not possible but nevertheless still desired. I do not suggest that Indian museums were in an atrophying state or static in relation to institutions outside India, so it is important to acknowledge the internal and external dynamics that existed around Indian museums and to which they adjusted. In trying to highlight such responsive alterations more clearly, we might think of the Lahore Museum as a series of 'investigative modalities.' Borrowing this phrase from Bernard Cohn (1996), who identifies museology as one general modality in the colonial documentation project, I would also apply museums as submodalities. For Cohn (*ibid.*) the primary role of investigative modalities was the collection, ordering, and classification of facts in formulating a knowledge base that could be disseminated in publishable form. Yet he places museology as a general modality, referring to it as having a less defined role in relation to administrative questions. To some extent, this is true, but I do think this chapter demonstrates that museums and museology were more than just a general area of governance; for instance, the Lahore Museum's development can be broken down into three main submodalities that operated in direct linkage with administration: first, encyclopaedic and imperialist; second, industrial art and trade; and third, modernising, public education, and nationalist. Each submodality had its own agendas and aims, which were not disconnected but fed into the next in an accumulative process. This possibility rested on the ideological elasticity of objects and

the adaptive capacity of the museum: objects that were collected and displayed, despite the pretence of fixed rhetoric and rigid framing, contained room for representational manoeuvrability that enabled change and fluidity in their use and the meanings ascribed to them. This inherent quality engendered in colonial museums the ability to mutate and adjust to new ideals that were required of a museum—from imperial archive in the early nineteenth century to public museum in the twentieth—and so the museum was a powerful political sign of colonial culture in India that awaited new identities in the post-Independence era.

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Chapter 2

COLONIAL MEMENTOS TO POSTCOLONIAL IMAGININGS

The Transformation of the Lahore Museum



Indeed, Pakistan possesses great potentials for establishing a series of varied types of Museums throughout its length and breadth. Its history is long, its culture is colourful, its arts and crafts are bewitching, its archaeological discoveries rank topmost in the world, and its technological achievements are great.

—S. R. Dar (1977:2–3)

On Independence, Pakistan received a small share of museums situated within its territorial limits. . . . But there was no institution in Pakistan where the people could obtain anything approaching a general conspectus of the development of civilization in this country. . . . It was soon realised that the young Pakistani Nation required a National Museum worthy of its great cultural heritage.

—S. A. Naqvi (1970:1–2)

A NATIONAL IDENTITY FOR THE *AJAIB GHAR*

The optimism voiced in the mid-1970s by Dr. Saifur Rahman Dar, former Director of the Lahore Museum (1974–1998) and prominent Pakistani archaeologist/museologist,¹ pointed to the cultural and historical riches available to the Pakistani nation for development of new museums. This characteristically reflects the desire among new and postcolonial² nations such as Pakistan for self-representation,³ which is

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politically rationalised by the need to consolidate and construct cultural icons that visualise and interpret the nation's ideology, identity, and, as S. A. Naqvi suggested, 'development of civilization' within which the nation can be chronologically situated.⁴ National museums are vital cultural and political capital/investments for postcolonial nations since they publicly embody and exhibit the collective national character in their material collections for citizens and global tourists to consume, while acting as custodians of cultural heritage. They are justified by multifaceted benefits—social, cultural, and educational, as S. A. Naqvi stated at the inauguration in 1970 of the National Museum of Pakistan's new building in Burns Gardens, Karachi:

The basic objectives of a national museum are to collect, preserve, study and exhibit the records of the cultural history of a country and to promote learned insight into the personality of its people. Cultural relics of a nation are the virtual foundation for the advancement in corporate life. As achievements acquired after prolonged struggle with nature and environment, they manifest the store of creative intelligence, initiatives, perseverance and integrity that have gone into the making of a particular national character.⁵

Although the formation of new national museums is important, my interest here is in examining the process of museum decolonisation in postcolonial societies, which is frequently ignored within museum research—specifically the ambiguities entailed in transforming colonial museums⁶ into national icons. The most obvious course of action for colonial museums in postcolonial societies is one of conversion and reinscription through the remits of national rhetoric and identity, with those not complying being popularly imagined as barren, dusty storehouses of the past⁷ that are of little interest to the public, curators, or researchers, who are attracted instead by new museological splendours of the modern nation.⁸ Yet, postcolonial nations of South Asia alongside the construction of new wonder houses have to contend with unchanging colonial museums that have remained since the British had left.⁹ It is my contention that these colonial museums, at least in South Asia, should not be sidelined, because they occupy a tantalising position that disrupts the presumed chronological progression from colonial to national museum representation, while deposing the lifeless image associated with colonial museums through local visitors' curiosity and attraction for them (Chapters 4 and 5). In attending to these neglected institutions not only is the imagining around culture, history, and the nation (Anderson 1991), as portrayed in South Asian museums, better understood in its own right, but the precarious process of decolonisation is

exposed as partial and incomplete, reflecting in part on the ambivalence of nationalism itself (Bhabha 1994).

Severing the colonial umbilical cord by reinscribing and rewrapping the colonial museum's cultural and historical representations with national narratives of cultural integration, heritage, and history is ideologically desirable but in reality can be complicated. Transforming a museum from colonial to national involves more than changing status or replacing an old cultural/political discourse with another; the process is contingent on interest, investment (Chapter 3), and strength of national ideology—examined here—and can be riddled with contestation and questioning of whose interests are served—elite/subaltern. Moreover, the conversion is never immediate; a time lag is inevitable. Keeping these predicaments in mind, I wish to investigate the Lahore Museum's postcolonial history in this chapter, which began not with a new Pakistani identity after Independence but the disruptive effects of the subcontinent's Partition in 1947, making decolonisation double-edged: first from British colonists and second an Other of the self—India.

The repercussions of Partition on the Lahore Museum's postcolonial development from the late 1940s, when it was undergoing modernisation (Chapter 1), are obvious if we note the time lag between Partition in 1947 and the timing of Dr. Dar and Dr. Naqvi's comments regarding the establishment of 'national' museums. Immediately, one is forced to consider why it should have taken nearly three decades for this recognition, and makes us reassess the relationship between museums and national development and how it operates in a postcolonial society in which the process is not limited to acts of reinterpretation alone but influenced by sociopolitical policies, funding, and cultural coherence. Sixty-four years after its creation, democracy and national unity evade Pakistan, more so now with current attributions of terrorism and state failure¹⁰—so what has this meant for the Lahore Museum's postcolonial predicament, and what route has decolonisation taken? A good way to proceed is to start with the political events leading up to India's Independence in 1947, which for Punjab meant Partition. The confusing yet staggering changes induced by Partition dislocated people and cultural boundaries, as well as museum objects and professionals, and forced the Lahore Museum to adopt a new identity as part of a smaller Punjab Province in the new nation of Pakistan. Partition created an identity clash between a national ideology imagined around an Islamic nation with a secular Muslim society and a museum materially and ideologically evolved to represent an encyclopaedia of arts, history, and manufactures of colonial Punjab.

Before examining attempts at nationalising the Lahore Museum, we should look at the political history that created the demand for Pakistan, which continues to haunt its society and national identity today.

PARTITION AND PAKISTAN

On June 3, 1947, Viscount Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India, announced the British Plan for the transfer of power, including the provision for Partitioning Punjab and Bengal Provinces under a Boundary Commission for each. Partition was the bitter finale to India's struggle for Independence, which along the way spawned communal politics and nationalism(s). The inherent politics and rivalries of Indian nationalism were a culmination of heightened social fractions among communities that increasingly aligned themselves along religious, translated into cultural, identities that led to separate Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh political movements,¹¹ all vying for political representation in central government. To some extent, this situation was the outcome of British abstinence from reforming religious and cultural spheres of society,¹² enabling communal tensions to gain a stronghold, particularly after the introduction of separate electorates for Muslims and non-Muslims. Such political reforms aggravated communal identifications, which eventually inspired potential national identities¹³ and guided the positionality of the artificial dividing line in Bengal and Punjab Provinces that segregated majority Muslim from non-Muslim areas.¹⁴

It would be misleading to suggest that Indian nationalism, and subsequent nationalist heroes of India and Pakistan, from the outset operated in a communal manner. However, politicised cultural and religious identities played a significant role in Indian nationalism from 1920s onward, primarily in response to disputes over central representation. Constraints of space prevent intricate discussion of Indian nationalism, and so I confine myself to the figure of Muhammed Ali Jinnah, or *Quaid-i-Azam*¹⁵ (Supreme Leader), who directed activities of the All India Muslim League (AIML) from the 1930s up to the creation of Pakistan.¹⁶ Although wrongly maligned as the divider of India, Jinnah is an interesting political figure, encompassing the complex negotiations and shifting affiliations of Indian nationalists (Hindu and Muslim), which in the end turned an ardent secularist into a communalist demanding Pakistan.

Indian nationalism has its roots in the late nineteenth century, when elite Indians, and increasingly the colonially educated middle class, were introduced to liberalist ideals of democracy, self-determination, community, and the nation yet were denied equal citizenship rights and access to public institutions.¹⁷ The hypocrisy of the situation led to the rise of nationalist consciousness headed in 1885 by the Indian National

Congress (Congress from now on), as an All-India platform for political self-assertion. It was with Congress that Jinnah's political career took off, when he became Dadabhai Naoroji's (President of Congress) private secretary in 1906. At that time, Jinnah's political inclinations allied the national unity goal espoused by Naoroji, and he kept the company of nationalists such as Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Ironically, the AIML also formed in Dhaka in 1906,¹⁸ but significantly Jinnah remained with Congress at this time, indicating that his political convictions were secular and geared toward a united India.

Even after joining the AIML in March 1913, Jinnah's loyalty to the Muslim cause did not eclipse his nationalist ideals, which lay squarely in unifying Hindu and Muslim communities, earning him the title Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity.¹⁹ In October 1916, while proposing a transformation of provincial governments, he stated: 'Hindus and the Muslims should stand united and use every constitutional and legitimate means to effect that transfer occurs as soon as possible . . . the Promised Land is within sight. "Forward" is the motto . . . for young India.'²⁰ Initially, the AIML was primarily interested in securing constitutional rights for Indian Muslims as a religious minority in the separate electorates rather than establishing a separate Islamic state; however, what concerned minorities such as Indian Muslims was the rise of extremist elements in Congress and their constitution of a national identity biased toward Hindu interests and power. Communal agitations between Hindu and Muslim communities had been increasing since the latter part of the nineteenth century, evidenced by various religious movements, popular imagery,²¹ and rhetoric employed, which now acquired a political edge.²² In response, Muslim activists and the AIML consolidated an identity for themselves by mobilising religious symbols and reinterpreting history based on the Mughal empire, the early days of Islam (especially the *hijrat*²³), and the universal Islamic brotherhood—the *ummah* (see Talbot 2000)—which also inspired Muhammad Iqbal's philosophical and poetic works.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Muslim nationalism benefited from the ideological cogitations of Muhammed Iqbal—the poet/philosopher of the East.²⁴ Iqbal's politics demanded independence for Indian Muslims within their own state if a majority, or complete self-determination if in numerical minority (Qureshi 1979). The 'Muslim issue' for Iqbal was not just constitutional, as for Jinnah, but a cultural dilemma requiring active sustenance of Muslim identity through spiritual activity and Islamic values; in this respect, his political stance was closer to the earlier Aligarh Movement's call for separatism. Like Jinnah's, Iqbal's earlier work eulogised a common Indian nationality, but by 1930 he was convinced that a Muslim nation based on personal Islamic law (*Shari'at*)

was possible only in a separate state. For Iqbal, any national polity had to retain Islamic principles of solidarity (*millat*), and so his solution was to reintroduce the two-nation theory (Ahmed 1979). Iqbal expounded this vision for a separate Muslim state, present-day Pakistan, in his famous presidential address at the Allahabad Session of the AIML in December 1930:

I would like to see the Punjab, Northwest Frontier Province, Sind [*sic*] and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state Self-government within—or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me the final destiny of the Muslims at least of the North-West India.²⁵

Religion and politics were not separable for Iqbal, who saw Islam as providing the essential moral fibre for good governance;²⁶ however, Iqbal's death in 1938 meant that his vision was not to be realised within his lifetime. The question then is this: what circumstances converted Iqbal's political philosophy, which as Barbara Metcalf (1979) notes during his own lifetime was largely ignored, into the ideology behind the demand for Pakistan? Religion, for Jinnah, had no place in governance with constitutional politics and a just legal framework being the basis of a nation,²⁷ so what caused him to adopt Iqbal's political philosophy? The switch can be understood if one looks at the turning point in Jinnah's political attitude from secularist to communalist, which came with the publication of the Nehru Report in 1928, which was severely criticised by the Muslim community as compromising their position at the centre of power.²⁸ Jinnah offered Congress amendments to the report in an attempt to negotiate and on March 28, 1929, he published his alternative to the Nehru Report, in which the agenda delineated a better constitutional position for Muslims in fourteen points, but these were rejected, and Jinnah decided to part ways with Congress. However, even after being elected as the AIML's permanent president five years later in 1934, Jinnah maintained his stand for a united India, confessing in 1936: 'My soul and only objective has been the welfare of my country. I assure you that India's interests are and will be sacred to me.'²⁹

Jinnah, a proud Indian, also had to protect Muslim interests, and so after the 1937 elections and provincial particularisms in which Congress swept the board and the AIML performed dismally, he was forced to demand a separate independent state along communal lines. The next step for Jinnah was to form alliances between Muslim groups in order to overcome existing fractionalism that was weakening the AIML's political solidarity, and so he rallied support from the Muslim majority provinces of Bengal and Punjab,³⁰ which were vital to the AIML's future success. It was now that Jinnah took recourse to Iqbal's ruminations, since they

provided the AIML with an ideological vision and mass appeal among Indian Muslims, which it had so far lacked. This change in emphasis was communicated to the masses on March 23, 1940, as the Lahore Resolution, premised on application of Iqbal's 'two-nation' theory. This shift in Jinnah's attitude was a matter of redefining boundaries to geographically unite majority Muslim areas to form a secular nation-state (Ahmed 1997; Qureshi 1979), rather than to import wholesale Iqbal's religious nationalism. Pakistan as the national goal of Muslim India now occupied all of Jinnah's negotiations, and Jinnah's reply to a letter from Gandhi in 1940 reflects this political stance: 'I have no illusion in the matter, and let me say again that India is not a nation, nor a country. It is a Sub-continent, composed of nationalities, Hindus and Muslims being the two major nations.'³¹

In the 1940s, Jinnah felt his efforts were finally uniting Indian Muslims as he states in his Presidential Speech at the AIML Madras Session of April 1941, entitled *Our Five-Year Plan*:

Since the fall of the Mughal Empire . . . Muslim India was never so well organized and so alive and so politically conscious as it is to-day. . . . We have established a flag of our own, a national flag of Muslim India. We have established a remarkable platform which displays and demonstrates a complete unity of the entire solid body of Muslim India. We have defined in the clearest language our goal about which Muslim India was groping in the dark and the goal is Pakistan.³²

In anticipation of Pakistan, Jinnah suggested drawing up a five-year plan for nation-building that organised departments of 'national life' into four pillars: Educational Plan, Economic Plan, Social Uplift, and Political Training/Consciousness (Akhtar 1945:81–82). Although the emphasis was on a nation for Indian Muslims, Jinnah was emphatic about the Pakistani state being secular, which was clearly stated in his famed election speech as the first President of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan: 'You are free, you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the State.'³³ For Jinnah, religion and caste divisions were the root cause behind Indian society's colonial domination, and even though he was aware that Muslims were divided by religious factions and provincial identity, he hoped these discriminations would also disappear under the modern concept of citizenship—being a Pakistani.³⁴

On August 14, 1947, India was split, and amid the turmoil of Partition, Pakistan came into being composed of two halves—West and East Pakistan,³⁵ with Jinnah as its first Governor-General. Sovereignty

was gained, but Pakistan was a fragile new nation with weak political and economic infrastructures, no constitution, and impending rehabilitation of migrants from India.³⁶ This delicate condition was evident to Jinnah, who tried to consolidate and secure sovereignty by rallying support for nation-building projects of industrialisation; strategic defence; modern, scientific, and technical education; and cultural integration of the provinces. Although all these areas required investment and development, cultural integration was most precariously situated, since Pakistan's conceptualisation of national integration was based on a weakly formulated secular Muslim identity and unable to offer a pan-Pakistani alternative³⁷ that could contend with existing well-established provincial identities and their local practices, cultures, and languages. An acutely aware Jinnah stated in 1948: 'Pakistan is the embodiment of the unity of the Muslim nation and so it must remain. That unity, we as true Muslims, must jealously guard and preserve. If we begin to think of ourselves as Bengalis, Punjabis, Sindhis, etc. first and Muslims and Pakistanis only incidentally, then Pakistan is bound to disintegrate.'³⁸

Pakistan had come into existence with a multitude of problems, and the onus was on the Governor-General to find a solution; however, Jinnah was unable to develop any policies, set priorities, or initiate infrastructural or constitutional developments, perhaps because of lack of time, opportunity, or, possibly, inclination (Qureshi 1976). Thirteen months after Pakistan's creation on September 11, 1948, its architect passed away and with that the hope for political stability, cultural integration, and a democratic Pakistan.

Pakistan's subsequent political history is chequered by extensive periods of depoliticisation under military/authoritarian dictatorships that in hindsight expose the gargantuan task Jinnah faced after Partition: it took nine years to frame the first constitution and a staggering twenty-four years before the first general elections in 1970 (Jalal 1995). The obsession with centralised politics (*ibid.*) following Jinnah's demise allowed bureaucrats and military personnel to dominate and abuse a weak political structure and thereby deny basic democratic rights (*ibid.*), but, paradoxically, tightening of central control was also urgently needed for Pakistan to demonstrate its consolidated nature. However, the lack of elected government created a power imbalance between centre and provinces that led to the emergence of subnationalist movements and ethnic and sectarian conflicts.

Culturally, Pakistan's political centre is an oligarchy of Punjabis,³⁹ which has caused weaker ethnic groups to react by asserting their identities more robustly: within Punjab itself, the Seraikis of South Punjab demand a separate region called Seraikistan, and, similarly, Baluchistan's ethnic-identity revival aims for cultural and political autonomy (Hewitt

1996). Mobilising local cultural symbolism, language, and social values, ethno-nationalists assert control over their cultural definitions and the recent renaming of NWFP, since Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is a partial success here. By far the most noticeable of these ethnic insurgencies is that of the *Muhajir*⁴⁰ community in Sindh, who formed the MQM (*Muhajir Qaumi Mahaz*/The Muhajir National Front) in 1984 to identify their separate ‘nationality’ and increase Sindh involvement within central politics (Alavi 1973a; I. Malik 1996).

These ethnic conflicts disrupt Pakistan’s cultural identity from within and highlight nationalists’ inability to offer a diverse vision of culture as they inflexibly adhere to a monolithic ideology of an Islamic nation that is supposed to supersede other identities—individual/collective. Today, as in the past, local cultural/social affiliations and community bonds pervade—such as regional language, popular/doctrinal Islam, tribal idioms and organisation in Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Sindh—and in Punjab *biraderi* (patrilineal kinship ties) or *zat* (social group)⁴¹ inform social and political structures. Attempts at projecting a unified image of national culture and society in media⁴² and education have included promoting national dress—*shalwar kameez*, language—Urdu, flag, currency, religion (predominantly *Sunni* Islam),⁴³ and sport—cricket. However, cultivation of this pan-Pakistani image by the state appears contrived and fails to provide national integration, since it contests regional differences: a prime example being Urdu—given the status of a lingua franca—but for the majority remains a second language.⁴⁴ The problem again harks back to Pakistan’s inception when the majority Muslim provinces embraced religious identity for future political gains, not as a replacement for their ethnic identity and culture.⁴⁵ Islam is an identity marker for the majority of Pakistanis, but it is one option among others (Chapter 4); even being Pakistani takes precedence only at heightened moments of nationalist fervour, such as cricket matches or marking Independence Day.

Pakistan’s nationalist rhetoric glosses over these intricacies and romantically monumentalises its emergence by attaching itself to the sub-continent’s Islamic history that begins with the arrival of Arab traders in the seventh century and goes on to include the AIML, Muslim nationalism, and political personalities such as Jinnah and Iqbal, all selectively symbolic icons of Muslim heritage and defenders of Islam from British colonists and Hindu India after the Mughal Empire’s decline in the early nineteenth century. At times, pre-Islamic civilisations such as Indus Valley and Buddhist⁴⁶ are included, but most commonly Pakistan, in a rather simplistic way, is largely delineated through a religio-historical narrative that has closer links with other Islamic nations and the *ummah*.⁴⁷ It is this weak anchoring in Islam and Muslim identity that is currently

offering leverage to ideological importations of Wahabism, Talibanism, and Jihadist culture, which employ a purist form of Sunni-Hanafi Islam of the Deobandi sect (see Bennett Jones [2009]; Hussain [2007]; and Synnott [2009]) to create conservative and violent imaginings for Pakistan.

Perhaps Pakistan's predicament is reflective of what Gyan Prakash (1996) sees as a climate of unmaking history in the non-West, in which fragments from the past are used to construct an imagined community (Anderson 1991).⁴⁸ The rigid faithfulness to the belief that Pakistan's very origin was to fulfil a religious ideal and create an Islamic state for the Muslims of India (Alavi 1988), which itself is now threatened from within, has prevented postcolonial Pakistan from cultivating a pluralistic identity and culture that can offer real cohesion and stability. Simultaneously, Pakistan's preoccupation with internal political wrangling and external defence has meant little sustained interest and investment in the development of cultural institutions that reflect or allow unbiased debate on its diverse cultures and societies. Returning to our original concern over the postcolonial Lahore Museum, we can ask: what impact did Partition and the contrived political imaginings of Pakistan have on this cultural institution? It is time we explored the museum's fate in all this.

SPLITTING MEMENTOS

Partition split colonial Punjab in two, leaving the Lahore Museum on the Pakistani side and in dire need of help, as B. A. Kureshi⁴⁹ notes: 'There was hardly any staff and annual grants for maintenance were minimal' (1994:1). The upheaval had disoriented the museum and created multidimensional problems, with the most severe being the absence of museum professionals, which pragmatically prolonged the lull in recovery, since there were no cultural caretakers or visionary helmsmen to direct the museum. At the time of Partition, the archaeologist Charles Fabri,⁵⁰ who had previously carried out reorganisational work at the museum when posted as Officer on Special Duty in 1936–1937, was in charge, but he left for Delhi in 1948. Had Fabri stayed to bridge the transition from colonial to postcolonial, the Lahore Museum may have recuperated faster from the ensuing mayhem. Instead, the museum's management was also ruptured: the last of the colonials had left, and the museum urgently needed a new curator during the unstable post-Partition years.

Curators/Caretakers

The first curator to be appointed following Fabri's departure was M. Ismail, who shifted from Moenjodaro Archaeological Site and

Museum, with his tenure lasting four years (1948–1952), after which the post was occupied by an officiating curator—Malik Shams, a former Inspector of Schools, until a suitable candidate was found. This crucial formative period of the postcolonial Lahore Museum, instead of receiving focus and direction, was plagued by shuffling of museologically inept curators. The shortage of trained staff caused the museum to fall into decline under what Dr. Dar called ‘unprofessional’ management.⁵¹ It would seem that the Lahore Museum’s initial years of independence, rather than being ones of visualisation and reconstruction as a national institution, were tainted by misguidance, and as Dr. Dar⁵² stated, this period was characterised by disorganisation, with many colonial records and objects being misplaced, lost, and even destroyed. However, once Malik Shams left in 1965, a positive measure was taken when B. A. Kureshi set up an Advisory Committee to discuss ways of rescuing this ailing cultural institution.

This period is considered the bleakest in the Lahore Museum’s development; former Director Dr. Anjum Rehmani (1994–1999) called the first 10–15 years ‘dormant’ and characterised by neglect, but under B. A. Kureshi’s watchful eye, renovation began at the museum, which had reached its ‘lowest point’ both physically and in organisation. As Kureshi describes:

Plaster from walls had fallen, floors were broken, wood work was crumbling and all ceilings leaked. There was no electricity and the heat and glare streaming in through the large Gothic windows scorched the exhibits. The Museum had no laboratory, store for reserves or workshop, not even drinking water or public toilets. One . . . [room] was used as library with reportedly 6,000 un-catalogued books and journals without a Librarian. Outside there was no wall or fencing and the ground was uneven littered with filth and overgrown with wild bushes . . . a few turfed patches where stray dogs roamed and gamblers found shelter.⁵³

Refurbishment of the building and galleries was primary: walls were replastered, floors relaid, woodwork treated, windows screened off to reduce glare, and artificial lights introduced (Kureshi 1994). The Lahore Museum benefited from B. A. Kureshi’s involvement, since at that time he worked in the Planning Department, Government of West Pakistan, and so was able to utilise his contacts in getting renovations underway.

However, curator appointments remained disappointing with the next In-Charge—Syed M. Taqi, again being a school inspector with little museological interest; perhaps his appointment was a timid attempt at fostering an educational focus, when in reality it indicates the dearth of knowledgeable museum specialists in Pakistan. This situation hindered the Lahore Museum’s tentative reinitiation and affected not only

administration but also reclassification of the material disorder cast on the collections. The museum needed more than a cosmetic facelift; it required a complete reordering of sections, reflecting the national ideology if decolonisation was to be successful.

Before assessing the changes that were implemented in the aftermath of Partition, I want to give a sense of the chaos that prevailed in the museum by recounting a chance meeting with Ejaz Ali Sahib—who migrated to Lahore during Partition and described himself as an ‘admirer’ and ‘regular visitor’⁵⁴ to the museum. His cherished memories of visits are worth recalling here, since they relay first-hand insights of a period that is officially not well documented.

Ejaz Ali

One October afternoon I found myself chatting about my time in Lahore to a gentleman, who, like most Lahorites, was curious to find out which parts of his city I had encountered, and so he methodically questioned me and asked whether I had been to the *Ajaib Ghar*. When I replied that I had and explained my research, his face lit up, and our conversation turned from a mundane chat into an interesting afternoon of recollections and memories about his affection for the museum. The person in question was 66-year-old Ejaz Ali from Imamia Colony, a lower-class residential area in north Lahore lying just off the main Grand Trunk Road, with mainly small brick houses, *kaachi* lanes, and a small main bazaar. Until recently, Ejaz Ali had been a rickshaw driver, but following an accident he was forced to retire because of poor eyesight. Before this, he had worked as a bus hawker, bulldozer operator, and on board ships, which afforded him the opportunity to travel to Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt.

Ejaz Ali was born and brought up in Amritsar and came to Lahore in 1947, when he was 11 years old, with his family, who settled in the Gowalmandi area. An avid collector, he possesses several collections of coins (*sikay*), stamps (*ticket*), pens, books, and ‘art’ pieces that comprise little statuettes, carvings, damascene work, an extensive array of old tiles, and architectural stonework that he found abandoned in the Walled City. Another ‘artistic’ interest was photography—collecting photographs and making decorative albums. In the past, his collections were extensive, and he took pride in showing and telling others about his ‘antiques,’ but sadly admitted that over the years some stamp books and coin collections had been sold during periods of cash shortage. Now, owing to his age and failing eyesight, he was inclined to divest many things.⁵⁵ Beautiful and curious objects that spark the imagination more than adhere to rules of authenticity or value fascinated Ejaz Ali and

were supplemented by his extensive ‘knowledge’ on a range of subjects spanning history, medicine, religion, travel, art, and ancient civilisations. He proudly stated:

I am self-taught, I read books, watch *television*, I love to watch National Geographic and Discovery and films—English, Indian, Pakistani—all of them. . . . Also when I attend *mahfil* [gatherings] of friends or Imams, this is an opportunity for me to learn and discuss. . . . Sometimes people make things up just to impress others but I can tell they are wrong and I will tell them so and usually they are astonished . . . as when they look at me, the way I dress and even my profession, they think he won’t know anything: a *ricksha-wallah*, in a *shalwar-kameez* with my *dhoti* over my shoulder. . . . If only I had pursued these interests when I was growing up but in those days no one encouraged me and then there were no resources . . . even when I visited the *Ajaib Ghar* my father used to ask me why I went there and what I did in there and what I got out of it, as he saw no benefit in going there.⁵⁶

The day before meeting Ejaz Ali, I had taken photographs of a few objects in the museum, and, upon seeing his enthusiasm, I promptly showed them to him. The delight on his face was obvious, as if the memorised objects in his mind had come to life. At times, struggling to focus on the images, he intently examined each photograph and, recalling its display position, confirmed it as belonging to the museum. He named each object and related its significance, such as the Fasting Buddha (illus. 22), ‘which depicts the Bodhisattva attaining enlightenment.’ As we talked, Ejaz Ali remembered his initial visits after joining



22 *Fasting Buddha* (second century C.E.)—one of the masterpieces at the Lahore Museum

Islamia School on the Lower Mall Road, whose proximity to the Lahore Museum meant regular visits, which helped him to develop a keen interest. These visits were not part of the school curriculum but the initiative of his eighth-to-tenth class⁵⁷ teacher, who frequently took students to the museum; however, what Ejaz Ali distinctly remembered of that time was the museum's disorder.

Despite having many inspiring objects, Ejaz Ali recalled the chaotic and unorganised condition of the Lahore Museum, where gallery floors were sometimes cluttered with piles of objects, which he said was understandable, because 'it was a time of change, and we had just had Partition . . . but work was slow and not very focused and I would not have been surprised if many objects went missing . . . as anyone could have come in and taken things, security was not an issue at that time.'⁵⁸ These comments were based on Ejaz Ali's observations and participation in trying to help to clear some of the disorder. He remembered how in those early years, people, especially college students, were called to libraries and the museum to help out with checking, classifying, and cataloguing remaining collections; so as a teenager Ejaz Ali spent many days listing objects in registers and putting them back on display:

There was no one way of doing it, we were given registers and told to list the objects and I wondered how they would later make sense of them as one person wrote descriptions whereas another would just put down 'a bowl.' We were not experts, and so could not give the detailed descriptions they would give . . . [but] it also gave me the chance to hold some of those things and see them up close, [and] that was fantastic.⁵⁹

The dismal state recollected by Ejaz Ali dates back to the 1950s and must have lingered until the Advisory Committee under B. A. Kureshi intervened in 1965, when the museum was closed for renovation including a 'complete [restoration] of antiquities and the creation of new sections' (Rehmani 2000:3). Efforts concentrated on both the physical building/galleries and the reordering of collections, which aimed to improve the museum, reminiscent of the 1940s, through 'scientific planning' (Kureshi 1994) and free up space for new exhibitions and galleries. One collection that emigrated was the industrial material, with the majority being sent to the Industrial Department of the Punjab Government (*ibid.*), although objects representing historical or cultural significance were retained to enhance the museum's conversion into a 'Cultural and Historical Museum' (*ibid.*:3) centred on 'antiquities' (*ibid.*). The Lahore Museum, despite suffering from a lack of maintenance and professionalism, was having a cultural turn in the 1960s and trying to overcome the effects of Partition's de-accessioning.

Collections/Objects

The brunt of Partition, as a specific historical juncture in South Asia's political history, was directly felt by the Lahore Museum as its image and patina, accrued over ninety-one years under colonial rule, was fractured by forced de-accessioning and splitting of its collections between India and Pakistan. Ironically, this gave the new nations parts of the same collections for utilisation in signifying two different authorships of cultural heritage and national history.⁶⁰ In discussing the division of objects, Mrs. Nusrat Ali (Keeper of Fine Arts) stated that many objects were temporarily shifted to India in haste for safeguarding during Partition, and negotiations for their return were supposed to take place but never did and were unlikely to: 'We have not been able to sort out Kashmir so what hope is there for the objects at the museum . . . perhaps this is for the best as *they* look after their culture!'⁶¹ To understand better such politically impregnated thoughts as well as the inescapable hybridity of the Lahore Museum's collections—Pakistani objects now signifying colonial and national culture—one must first return to the ambivalence of Partition itself.

Operating alongside the bargaining for territory on the political table, where nationalists pit social identities and histories of the various communities against one another for future power and representation, there was contestation for cultural property, too. It is undeniable that the new national borders of Partition had a real effect on the displaced people, who sought security and escape from communal violence, but people were not alone in being exiled. Alongside the artificial displacement of communities was the migration of mobile cultural property while immobile religious and cultural monuments were offered protection. This broader scope of Partition invoked division of historical, geographical, religious, social, and economic assets of the Punjab and Bengal Provinces.⁶² Within the Punjab, the Lahore Museum, as harbourer of cultural wealth, held material forms of all these assets and thereby was a zone of contestation, since the collections amassed under colonialism now held the potential and prestige to represent antiquity and cultural heritage for Independent India and Pakistan.

The division boundary for Punjab was demarcated on the map, but socially and culturally this period of uncertainty and chaos left the museum occupying a liminal space, with its possessions available for the taking by the culturally astute. Unlike the boundary, the decision about which objects were to go or to remain was speculative, and it is unclear to what extent upcoming nationalists of India and Pakistan were concerned about the institution's future or symbolic power of objects projecting national culture. However, it did not take long for visualisations of nationalist ideology in terms of identity, history, and memory

to materialise (see Guha-Thakurta 1997a); the form they took in the Lahore Museum and its success is examined in the rest of this chapter.

During Partition, concern was not just about splitting collections; it extended to safeguarding *all* museum objects. This concern was raised in discussions under the category of ‘other factors,’ wherein protection of ‘cultural institutions’ is mentioned,⁶³ and although the Lahore Museum is not specifically identified, it would not be assumptive to presume its inclusion during this tumultuous period. Lahore’s institutions particularly required this guardianship, since geographical proximity—only seventeen miles to the proposed (and current) border crossing⁶⁴—placed it at the core of the pandemonium and destruction of Partition in the Punjab. What made Lahore more vulnerable was its historical, religious, and economic significance for its major communities—Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh⁶⁵—whose fierce claims made it the focus of some of the worst violence (Tan and Kudaisya 2000).

The Lahore Museum was never attacked in the political unrest leading up to Partition, but it was exposed, and, following protocol during previous disturbances, it was closed to protect both visitors and the valuable antiquities. The threat came from the potential of museum objects to elicit communal responses among visitors influenced by the political conflict and propaganda beyond the museum, where the public’s imagination was susceptible to heightened emotions and projections of purified identities, causing some people to turn their destructive attentions to sections of the museum that were emblematic of the Other.⁶⁶ References to this protectionist stance are made in museum reports during moments of political agitation, as Lionel Heath noted in 1920:

The Punjab disturbances did not upset the routine of the Museum for more than a few days prior to the establishment of Martial-law, the collections having to be closed to the public as a precautionary measure only . . . [and] no trouble from the frequenters of the Museum was experienced, but the number of visitors was greatly reduced.⁶⁷

Although the museum was not primarily at risk, what made it a potential target was the uncertainty concerning public perception and interpretation of objects that were no longer simply signs of colonial India or its curiosities but that became porous and open to the political climate in which cultural signification was being forced to pay allegiance to various political persuasions. The involvement of the museum in political activity and debates on Partition should come as no surprise, since the modern museum was never neutral; rather, it was an implicit tool in the ‘politics of representation’ (Karp and Lavine 1991), especially in India, where it had been unequivocally employed to aid colonial expansion, knowledge, and propaganda (Chapter 1). This political franchise of the museum

took on an enduring reality in the hands of nationalists in postcolonial South Asia. The implications of this for the Lahore Museum's identity, where, sixty-four years after Partition, Pakistan's identity and substantive democracy (Bose and Jalal 1998) are still under construction and presently being threatened by religious conservatism (Datta and Sharma [2002]; Hussain [2007]; Synnott [2009]), is dealt with later, but for now the point is that the museum's collections paradoxically enabled both India and Pakistan to imagine respective narratives of history, culture, and identity out of a shared common wealth.

The Chandigarh Connection

One question that remains unanswered so far is this: what exactly was split between India and Pakistan? Unfortunately, this is a grey area where answers are not easy to come by. The Lahore Museum being a fixed property, like other historical monuments, was off limits to division; however, its mobile feature—the collections—were not exempt, and some objects had to migrate. So, what happened when it came to the division of the Lahore Museum? Clearly, this division took place; what were previously a single museum's material holdings now reside in two museums on either side of the border—the current Lahore Museum in Pakistan and Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh, in India (*illus. 23*).

However, the task of assessing the actual basis of division is not easy; official documentation relating to the transfer of objects is scant, and none is available in the archival institutions of Lahore. Even the museum is unclear about which objects went to India,⁶⁸ although the split is said to have entailed de-accessioning of forty percent of objects—a figure often repeated by museum staff as an indication of 'their' loss and the lack of



23 Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

reciprocity from India.⁶⁹ Sometimes it was suggested that division was random and a slightly unfair deal—almost a confidence trick by ‘Hindus’ working at the museum who understood the aesthetic value of art and so at Partition took many of the ‘best’ objects,⁷⁰ especially sculptures and paintings, whereas Muslims, ignorant of artistic merit, interpreted these objects as idolatrous and in effect gave away ‘treasure.’ It is difficult to prove such hearsay, which is a reminder of the pervasive nature of political antagonism that exists in South Asia. Lacking an official record, the only way to clarify the situation is to look at the real evidence resulting from the transfer of objects—namely, the museum in Chandigarh, which became the final destination for the relocated objects in India. On the Chandigarh side, object division is said to have taken place on April 10, 1948, with forty percent being sent to India;⁷¹ first they were accommodated in Amritsar, then Shimla, and by 1954 shifted to Moti Bagh Palace, Patiala, eventually finding their permanent home in Chandigarh.

The force behind establishing the Chandigarh Government Museum and Art Gallery was the city’s first Chief Commissioner, and art scholar, Dr. M. S. Randhawa. The museum building, designed by Le Corbusier⁷² in 1952, opened to the public on May 6, 1968, as part of a larger museum complex containing the Arts College (1959), the Natural History Museum in 1973, and the City Museum, inaugurated on December 17, 1997. Today the museum has seven permanent sections—Gandhara Sculpture, Other Early Indian Sculpture, Medieval Indian Sculpture, Textile, Contemporary Indian Art, Nine Master Artists of India, and Miscellaneous Items (*illus. 24*). These galleries inherently reflect the museological roots of the majority collections back to the Lahore Museum, mirroring in part its organisational nomenclature and gallery classification. The museum owes its very existence to the objects of Partition⁷³ and in return provided them with an opportunity to be displayed and admired while evidencing the paradox of colonial objects that now give testament to two nationalisms—Indian and Pakistani—which in much religio-political rhetoric are ideologically diametric. Partition in 1947 may have drawn a line on the map, but it failed to divide the region’s deeply entrenched culture, which never was, nor is, bounded by religion or politics.

The division of objects for the Lahore Museum stands as a dramatic marker of change in terms of possession and bifurcation of ‘priceless treasures of the Museum’ (Rehmani 1994:i); however, the effect was not only sentimental but also very palpable in fracturing development. B. A. Kureshi (1994) wrote: ‘A portion of the collection moved to India under the agreement at the time of Partition leaving awkward gaps, which the Museum Administration have been endeavouring to fill.’⁷⁴ The Lahore Museum, approaching the middle of the twentieth century, was then left physically decapitated and ideologically marred: it was ‘deprived . . . of



24 Ground-level galleries—Textile Sections at the Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh

many historical objects. It was more than a decade before steps were taken to give a new shape to the Museum, a process that continues to the present day' (Rehmani 1994:3).

Today the Lahore Museum is considered a premier cultural institution of Pakistan, containing the 'richest collection of cultural heritage' (Rehmani 1999:i), and is 'the most popular public institution of its kind in the country' (Rehmani 1994:4). So what transformations occurred following the 1965 renovations, and did they successfully convert the colonial museum into a national icon? What authority did political and cultural forces exert (Durrans 1992) in the museum's reorganisation, and what appropriations and relationships did the museum foster with different sociopolitical and cultural imaginings: exclusions of certain objects/representations and inclusion of new ones that fitted a specific projection of Pakistani culture? Or is the museum a tribute to the colonial era?

TRAPPED BY THE COLONIAL SHADOW: DECOLONISING THE LAHORE MUSEUM

At the time of Partition, the Lahore Museum had seven galleries,⁷⁵ with new ones slowly added as the museum modified and expanded. Attempts

at creating a distinctive image/aura for the postcolonial museum as a cultural symbol of Pakistan have had to confront outright a number of issues: First, how easily could objects of colonial acquisition policies, arranged and displayed according to the political/cultural/economic agendas of that era, be decolonised, or did a hybrid (Bhabha 1994) of colonial sedimentation and national imaginings emerge? Second, Pakistan's postcolonial identity as a hegemonic pedagogy narrating the nation through Islamic culture in the subcontinent and beyond (the *ummah*) has proved problematic for national integration. So, how effective has this identity been in recuperating the Lahore Museum from the colonial shadow? Has the national ideology enforced subjugation or abandonment of collections deemed un-Islamic and the retention of only those signifying Islamic civilisation and culture, such as Mughal artefacts and Quranic manuscripts? Third, the museum's heterogeneous collections (Chapter 1) evidence the fact that the nation's ancestry is pluralistic and not confined to Muslim civilisation and history. So, how has this diversity been accommodated? As Homi Bhabha states: 'In "foundational fictions" the origins of national traditions turn out to be as much acts of affiliation and establishment as they are movements of disavowal, displacement, exclusion and cultural contestation.' (1990:4) The nationalist ideology takes care of disavowal, Partition the displacement, so has there been any exclusion or cultural contest? The underlying question concerns the compatibility of galleries such as the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery for a museum that symbolises a nation whose ideology is uncomfortable with its non-Muslim identities and heritage. So, what image has been constructed?

The Lahore Museum today endorses a paternalistic image as keeper and preserver of heritage, antiquities, tradition, and history at national, regional, and global levels. The national level is reflected in the museum's widely acknowledged status as the pseudo-national museum, despite the 'national' appellation being given to the National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi. When I queried Dr. Dar about the Lahore Museum's national status, he confirmed: 'Officially, no, but collection and size-wise it is and embraces an entire history and culture of the country . . . [so] academically it is the national museum.'⁷⁶ The museum brings this unofficial standing to the notice of visitors attending public events such as Quiz Shows and lectures through the Director's⁷⁷ address, which is consolidated by a short slide-show of unique 'masterpieces' (*baymisaal navaadrat*) illustrating the museum's ownership of national heritage. The national designation is implicitly based on the museum's material archive, which is also employed in making regional and global patrimonial links, which the Director frequently evoked as the museum's *saka-fati mutalakat* ('cultural connections') with South-East Asian and the

Far Eastern civilisations. The Gandhara collection is a prime example in facilitating this regional heritage connection/cooperation, with interested visitors, academics, and dignitaries from Japan and South Korea often visiting specifically to see the collections and discuss opportunities for cultural exchange and funding programmes.

The Lahore Museum projects itself as ‘an ideal place where people can learn about other traditions and religions . . . through comparative study,’⁷⁸ offering historical, civilisational, and anthropological benefits for Pakistani citizens and global tourists. The perception of the museum as a custodian of cultural heritage is closely held by most staff and leaves little room for misconception, as Mr. Asim Rizwan, Assistant Public Relations Officer I (APRO I), confirmed: ‘Well the Museum is the identity of any society . . . these are our assets basically, and this is our presentation of them to people who come from all over the world to visit, they look at the work of our forefathers and estimate what they did, were like in the past and compare them to us today.’⁷⁹ Some gallery attendants expound similar views, which is not surprising, since their primary source of museum knowledge are fragments of information overheard in the APROs’ gallery tours or passed on by Gallery In-Charges.⁸⁰ Zaida Saeed, who joined the Lahore Museum in November 2002 as a clerk in the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery, in thinking about the museum’s role in society, told me: ‘Yes, there is a lot of benefit, because it is part of our inheritance, so the public and especially students should be aware of these objects . . . I think it is very important that people learn about this . . . you can say for their own future.’⁸¹

The issue of ownership is strongly accented with a stress on inherited heritage, which provides a sense of depth to Pakistan’s origins. As Nadeem Yousaf, a clerk in the Jain *Mandir*, Swat/Ethnological I/II and Armoury Galleries, stated: ‘what we have here are things which our ancestors have kept here and . . . [the objects] might awaken the public to do similar work.’⁸² The role of the Lahore Museum as a conduit between past and present, owning and safekeeping Pakistan’s ‘ancestral heritage,’ complicates the centrality given to Islamic history in national ideology, since the heritage on view encompasses a past in which Buddhist, Hindu, Jain, Sikh, and pagan cultures also flourished. It would seem that the Lahore Museum accommodates its heterodox possessions with ease, contra the hegemonic and homogenous identity of Pakistan’s imagined cultural heritage. But how has the museum been able to retain such cultural pluralism in its collections? To some extent, it is unclear what reshuffling took place following the interest of the Advisory Committee in 1965 and whether a new gallery organisation was instated; however, some definite changes occurred including the creation of the Islamic Gallery in 1966–1967.

The Islamic Gallery

The annual report for the Lahore Museum in 1942–1943⁸³ mentions a gallery for Islamic Arts and Crafts of India, and since no new acquisitions were made following Partition, it can be speculated that objects from the former were combined with others loosely fitting the theme of Muslim culture to create the current Islamic Gallery.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, the gallery's overt aim was to provide a greater visual presence of Muslim arts and culture in the museum, because they were considered underrepresented in the old museum (Kureshi 1994). The gallery was considered an 'historic event in the life of the Museum . . . hous[ing] all the treasure of Islamic Arts and Crafts . . . truly reflective of Muslim Art and genius';⁸⁵ however, it would be premature to regard the gallery as a political intervention enforcing or mimicking national ideology, since no direct Islamisation policy existed. Instead, this first step in reidentification might have been inspired by other exhibitions taking place in Pakistan in the late 1950s and 1960s⁸⁶ on similar themes of Islamic heritage.

Incorporation of this new theme—namely, the Muslim identity of Pakistan—by the museum should not be interpreted as depicting religion per se in the new gallery; rather, it was a move to attach an identity label that aimed to divorce the museum from its previous character. However, this subtle recoding of old exhibits with meanings reflecting postcolonial identity was not so easy to execute; instead, an uncanny character was imparted to a collection of 'art and craft' to doubly signify the rhetoric of Pakistan. So, while the museum embraced aspects of nationalism, such translations were possible only through the logic of the encyclopaedic museum. This ambiguity around the objectification of a generic 'Muslim culture' continues today; as Mr. Shoaib Ahmed, Islamic Gallery In-Charge, stated:

This gallery, despite its name, is not a reflection of Islam as such. . . . I remember when I took over this gallery and had a look round, I wondered why this gallery was called the Islamic Gallery when it . . . had nothing specifically to do with the religion except a few Qu'rans. But when you think of it in terms of art and craft . . . it makes sense and even the musical instruments, as they are used in *qaawali*. So, it should really be the Islamic Arts and Crafts Gallery.⁸⁷

The discrepancy between gallery name and displays that Mr. Shoaib Ahmed conveys as a conceptual unease also suggests a problem in representing Islam as a set of practices rather than orthodox beliefs. The exhibiting of Islam as an aesthetic or style of art/craft is possible, but the displays cannot be equated with religion as dogma per se. The Islamic Gallery neatly exemplifies the conflict that emanates from

the convergence of two stages of the Lahore Museum—colonial and national—whereby an uncertain rawness surrounds the *actual* meaning of objects, which ideological discourse can disguise but not control in terms of actual interpretations (Chapter 4).

A quick look at some gallery exhibits makes this disjuncture apparent: most date to the eighteenth/nineteenth century,⁸⁸ such as engraved metal-ware, enamel work, *papier-mâché*, *hookay*, lacquer-ware, footwear, woollen and silk embroideries, jewellery, glazed pottery from Multan and Bahawalpur, and carpets made in Multan Central Jail. Other objects include a sixteenth-century Sozni embroidery depicting Christ's birth, stone inscriptions from Sikander Lodhi's tomb in Lahore, a seventeenth-century carpet, Mughal and Sikh letters and orders, and a small fifteenth-century Durrani cannon. These objects gain coherence as vestiges made under/for/about Muslim patronage/rule, and it is only through recourse to the colonial category of industrial art/aesthetics that conceptual unification is achieved, which in a postcolonial framework can also be extrapolated to symbolise a richly creative Islamic civilisation in South Asia since the seventh century.

Addition of this new gallery was part of initial restructuring efforts,⁸⁹ and the partially modified Lahore Museum was inaugurated by then-President of Pakistan, Field Marshal Ayub Khan (1958–1969), on November 27, 1967. In hindsight, the restart for the 'new' museum is referred to as creating 'a principal repository of objects relating to the cultural heritage of Pakistan and other regions' (2000:3). However, it is unlikely that the museum at this time could have practically reflected the nationalist vision wholesale, even if ideologically desired, since attention was focused on getting the museum back into working order, with the main change being the Islamic Gallery. At best, it seems the Partition leftovers were redisplayed amid few resources, since museums at that time were not primary recipients of large-scale investment from the government as national policy was concerned with modernisation and socioeconomic reforms to aid development. Although Ayub Khan was interested in employing culture and media for political propaganda and in imposing levels of censorship,⁹⁰ his martial control did not extend to the Lahore Museum, and no collections were banned or classed as unfit for national culture. Yet, the terminology and rhetoric around the museum were being laced with a sense of cultural responsibility, and in 1969 the museum was given the status of an autonomous body under a Board of Governors⁹¹ headed by B. A. Kureshi. Just as structures of governance, economics, and social management were being formulated in Pakistan, so, too, was the museum being gradually restructured to index the nation at least in discourse, if not in form. The 1970s signalled the end of Syed M. Taqi's curatorship at the Lahore Museum, and among other gallery overhauls certain changes

were highly visible in conspicuously branding the museum as Pakistani: one was the creation of an additional floor⁹² to house the Independence Movement Gallery in 1973.

The Independence Movement Gallery

Today the Independence Movement Gallery charts the history of the Pakistan Movement through the workings of the AIML and its stalwarts. Over 2,000 images are said to be exhibited, including reproductions of photographs, drawings, paintings, and etchings; originals are not displayed for fear of damage by the visitors' excessive desire for tactile consumption, although actual front pages of the *Inquilab* newspaper, documents, and letters are exhibited, and in one section cases display some of Jinnah's belongings, such as a typewriter, teapot, pipe, watch, and AIML badges. This visual abundance putatively links modern South Asian politics to the larger scope of Muslim nationalism, charting, as the first text panel proclaims, '200 years of the Independence struggle.' The overarching dogma directing the sequence of images is one that naturalises the emergence of Pakistan as necessitated by the relegation of Indian Muslims to a secondary position in comparison to Others and culminated in the two-nation theory, whose propagators wholly or partially are celebrated in the gallery—such as Sir Syed Ahmed Ali Khan, Allama Iqbal, Jinnah, and Fatima Jinnah. The reasons behind the construction of this gallery are transparent—overt signs of nationalist activity and history needed to be inserted into the Lahore Museum to avert ambiguity over its cultural value and allegiance to the nation. This new gallery, along with the Islamic one, illustrate how elements of Pakistan's ideology were introduced to act as an umbrella under which other collections could be anchored and imbued with meaning as history, art, and antiquity of Pakistan—part of *its* roots and heritage.

The precise nature of nationalist history delineated in the gallery reveals the mode in which the museum has to some extent appropriated official national discourse. Pakistan's political history is presented in a series of 'stages'⁹³ from the eighteenth century until Independence, in which Muslim identity in India is shown as politically virulent in opposing threats from Others—at first the British, then Hindus/Sikhs. Visually this history is represented in iconic images of key stages and personalities⁹⁴ that testify to the struggle of Muslim nationalism and the eventual creation of Pakistan; the Gallery In-Charge, Mr. Asim Rizwan (also APRO I), underscored this: 'The gallery looks at the personalities of the Freedom Movement . . . [in] photographs that are not present in any other place. . . . [The public] can see a complete film of the Pakistan Movement here, they can see the whole picture. . . . Also, the

life histories of Quaid-i-Azam and Allama Iqbal are presented . . . since they are our heroes.’⁹⁵

This gallery is the most factual of all, with large text panels in Urdu expounding a didactic paradigm biased toward glorifying the nation’s struggle for existence, which is explicated on twenty-four panels⁹⁶ interspersed between images; the first set of panels deals with the Revolutionary Period 1757–1856, which earmarks the end of the Mughal Empire and the establishment of the East India Company after the Battle of Plassey (1757). The text interprets these events as the simultaneous decline of Muslim power and the rise of Muslim nationalism among patriotic individuals such as Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan in the four-year war at Seringapatam, the latter being exalted as a primordial nationalist and freedom fighter. This early nationalism is made foundational to later efforts of the Pakistan Movement through its opposition to an Other of the Muslims of India. This point of view permeates the remainder of the text panels; for example, the 1857 War of Independence is reduced to a battle between anti-Muslim British/Hindu collaboration versus the patriots (*mujjahidin*) who defended Islam.

The next section examines the ‘modernisation’ of Muslim society in the work of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan under the Aligarh Movement and outlines his two-nation theory, which took on actual political expediency with the formation of the AIML in 1906. Representation from this point onward focuses squarely on the AIML’s manifestoes, meetings, and particularly Jinnah’s leadership. The visual and textual representations together examine significant moments in the AIML’s history, its dealings with the British, Congress, and the key passing of the Lahore Resolution on March 23, 1940, which identified Muslims as a *qaum*; the contribution of women and student wings of the AIML is also noted. Pakistan’s creation is finally depicted in images of refugees moving across the Wagah border, but again this moment is highly propagandised as resulting from Hindu/Sikh agitation alone rather than as a tragedy inflicted on both sides of the new border. The last image in the gallery is a large painting showing Jinnah making a speech, with Lord Mountbatten in the background, and a couple of Pakistani flags Lahore, standing firmly beside the painting to signal the victory of what this gallery epitomises as a Muslim struggle for Pakistan.

At the time of the gallery’s construction, the political scene outside the museum was one of democracy following Pakistan’s first elections in 1970, which elected the Populist politics of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto’s (1971–1977) Pakistan People’s Party, which promoted Islamic socialism with land and labour reforms and which encouraged nationalisation of industry and banks. Ensuing major additions to the Lahore Museum

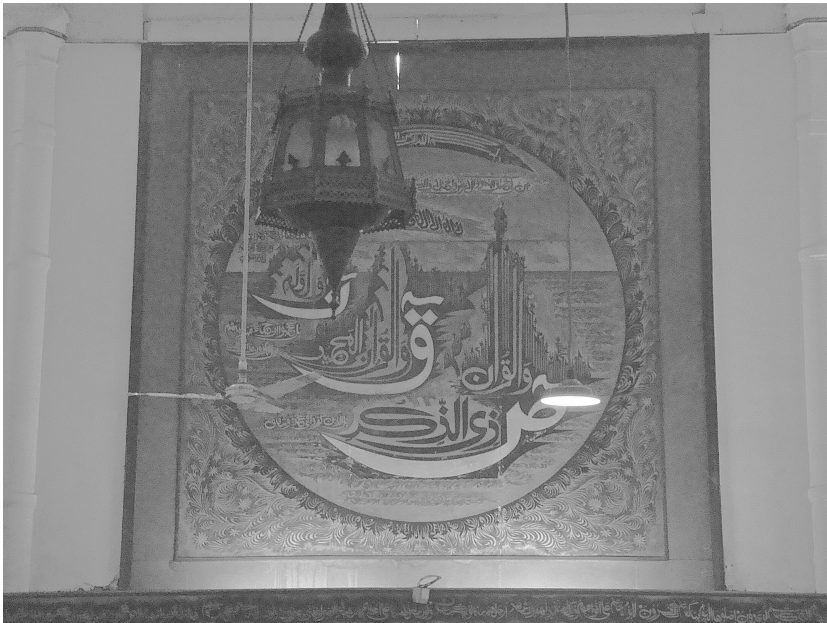
reflect this climate of nationalisation and freedom of cultural expression, as in the mural work of Syed Sadequain Ahmed Naqvi. Sadequain's art already adorned many other Pakistani public spaces,⁹⁷ but his work left an unparalleled visual imprint at the museum; in 1969 the Islamic Gallery gained *Asma-ul-Husna* ('The Ninety-Nine Beautiful Names of Allah'), and in 1972 he wrote *Surat Yaseen* from the Qu'ran on wood panels—this 260-foot calligraphy has been fixed onto display cabinets in the Islamic Gallery as panelling above the glass. But in 1973, Sadequain made an indelible mark with his majestic mural in the Miniature Painting Gallery; painted on forty-eight chipboard panels that cover the entire ceiling, from below it appears as a multitude of concentric circles, stars, and rotating rings in blues, oranges, and browns (*illus. 25*). This celestial vision is a meditation on the national poet Allama Iqbal's verse: *Sitaron*



25 Sadequain's mural in the Miniature Paintings Gallery

say agay jahan aur bhi hain ('Beyond the stars there are other worlds'). Among the depictions of explosive and dynamic movement, the mural investigates the development of man in relation to time, science, knowledge, and evolution, concluding with the word *aaj* ('today') in a pair of hands holding the world. The mural's dense philosophical, poetic, religious, and political iconography is open to multiple decipherments. Sadequain's mural serves the mass communicative purpose outlined by Satish Gujral (1997), who sees this form as fusing aesthetics with social commentary and political satire to visually inspire movements of social change. However, for official interpretation, the mural, along with Sadequain's other Qu'ranic calligraphy (illus. 26) articulates not so much artistic expression as veneration of Muslim identity and Pakistani creativity. Social change was an ideal for the Bhutto government, but in the late 1970s Pakistan took a jaundiced trajectory that prohibited such liberated discourse and social ideas—the onset of Islamisation. So, how did this bode for continuing change and interpretation at the Lahore Museum?

From 1977 to 1988, Pakistan was under Zia-ul-Haq's martial rule and his quest for the Islamisation of society. Sadequain's pictorial commentary's finale—*aaj*, in the form of a hammer and sickle—now



26 Calligraphy by Sadequain in the Islamic Gallery

preempted satire on this predicament, but his Qu'ranic calligraphies, although executed during Bhutto's era, paradoxically also fitted the stringent conceptualisation of Pakistani culture in Zia-ul-Haq's version of society governed by *Shari'at*. Zia justified his position and right to implement these changes by describing them as divine ordination for him to realise Pakistan's true Islamic identity, which he interpreted as bringing social stability and national unity. This was the first time that such puritanical nationalist ideology questioned Pakistan's secular vision and influenced policymaking and social restructuring;⁹⁸ however, the success of Zia's Islamisation was marred by the marginalisation of social sectors⁹⁹ and the rise of sectarianism and subnationalism. Culturally, this era was restrictive and counterproductive for Pakistan, especially in terms of creativity, as noted by Salima Hashmi (1997) in relation to the detrimental effects of stringent policies interested in 'cleansing' art forms and instilling pure Islamic aesthetics in the visual arts.¹⁰⁰

During the 1980s, expansion at the Lahore Museum further acquiesced to this representational conservatism and led to the addition of a new gallery in 1983, formed through internal division of the Islamic Gallery; Islamic manuscripts and calligraphy were extracted and exhibited in the correspondingly entitled Manuscripts and Calligraphy Gallery. For the museum, this expansion was also a pragmatic necessity, since Islamic Manuscripts had the only active acquisitions policy.¹⁰¹ Obviously, this policy, when contextualised within the Zia-fication of 1980s, is not at all unexpected, since it enhanced an Islamic presence in the museum and legitimated another Islamic gallery. But in 1984, another two galleries opened on more generic nationalist genres. The first was the Contemporary Crafts of Pakistan (illus. 27), based on relocated objects from the redundant Industrial Arts Museum in Chuburji, Lahore. Today it exhibits a mix of craft types similar to those displayed elsewhere in the museum: objects of lacquer-ware, *papier-mâché*, copper and brassware, silver jewellery, and even taxidermy. The visual differentiation from crafts displayed in the General Gallery or the Islamic Gallery is moot, and when I asked its Gallery In-Charge—Mr. Ishfaq Cheema—about the nature of this gallery, he was able to confirm only that all crafts were contemporary—post-1950s.¹⁰² The second gallery¹⁰³ was the Pakistan Postage Stamps Gallery, essentially a small room in which stamps and first-day covers of Pakistan Post are chronologically displayed from 1947 to 1981, including a special series issued as Pioneers of Freedom.

Rather than confer assessment on the usefulness of the Pakistan Postage Stamps Gallery and the Contemporary Crafts Gallery, I will just note that both galleries are in close proximity to the Independence Movement Gallery and the Coins¹⁰⁴ and Medals Gallery, which together



27 Display of Pietra Dura work and objects in lapis lazuli in the Contemporary Crafts of Pakistan Gallery

form a spatial conglomerate that explicitly visualises Pakistan's cultural nationalism. From an architectural point of view, this first floor of the museum forms a postcolonial section with three galleries chronologically tracing the nation's history in images, stamps, crafts, medals, and coins. Other museum sections that have emerged out of older collections and that also fit the national identity rubric include the Ethnological Gallery III and the Contemporary Paintings Gallery (majority of the paintings collected by B. A. Kureshi). The former in particular accommodates a unity-in-diversity theme representing a mixture of climes and provinces that exhibit the characteristic material culture of various Pakistani regions.

By 2003, the Lahore Museum had expanded from seven galleries in 1947 into twenty-two sections, a gradual process guided in part by shifting political ideals. At one level, the Islamic Gallery, Independence Movement Gallery, Sadequain's calligraphy, and the Manuscripts and Calligraphy Gallery symbolise how the museum has embraced a 'correct' political standard that tries to adopt a vision of Pakistani society integrated by Islamic resonances. However, to a large extent this has to be taken as a front that proclaims adherence, since what is inescapable is the way the Lahore Museum has bypassed total control or censorship from any political regime. The glaring presence today of many objects

with colonial classification and representation indicate just how much the museum escaped moments of radical cleansing that could have easily eradicated non-Islamic collections/images such as figural representations or ‘idols’ in the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery or the Gandhara Gallery. By exhibiting some conformist signs, the Lahore Museum has remained beyond the grips of grand political ambition and has managed to glide in and out of nationalist themes in Pakistan’s different political eras. This slippage cannot be taken as a form of resistance, intentional contestation, or evasion of political ideology by the Lahore Museum; rather, this fluid capability is a result of inconsistent investment, museological engagement, professionalism, and government interest in its development since 1947 (Chapter 3). In a subversive manner, this disinterest has allowed the Lahore Museum to accrue a representational democracy of Pakistan’s complex history and heritage that is elusive in other nation-building projects or ideals.¹⁰⁵

Clearly, changes since Partition have been made, as examined in this chapter, but equally there have been many hindrances, the obvious being shortage of funds, space, expertise, and vision, supplemented by unstable sociopolitics beyond the museum. Alterations and reorganisation of the material collections have sporadically taken place rather than a total revamp of the museum, with collections such as the Prehistoric or Gandhara being reclassified as primordial history of the nation.¹⁰⁶ The erratic and abrupt shifts in governments, the majority of which were anything but elected,¹⁰⁷ have led to additions of new narratives in the form of the Islamic or Independence Movement galleries, which although nationalist at heart have actually increased the eclectic feel, since the majority of the museum remains largely untouched. In a very effective and simple way, the fickle effect of postcolonial changes at the Lahore Museum is illustrated in a comment made by Dr. Dar: ‘When the PPP [Pakistan People’s Party] were in power they had to put a picture of Bhutto and his father in the Pakistan Gallery, and then when Bhutto was ousted people started saying why is his picture there and so it had to be taken down.’¹⁰⁸

THE POSTCOLONIAL PRESCRIPTIVE: PERSONALITIES AND IDEOLOGIES

The Lahore Museum and its objects today are enmeshed within a set of global and local networks different from the ones that propagated its severed beginnings following the effects of Partition; however, what remains fascinating about the museum is the colonial archive’s resilience and mode of representation. The majority of the collections still signify a previous reality, which perhaps comes with historical insight, but for visitors, they remain curiosities, and for museum staff, the objects are

culture, history, and heritage of Pakistan. Postcolonial changes and decolonisation at the Lahore Museum have involved overt inclusion of signs alluding to national ideology, but largely it has been a case of translating colonial heritage as antiquity.

I have been interested in exploring material, discursive, and political changes and the personalities behind them to examine the Lahore Museum's attempts at rehabilitation from the dramatic events of Partition that not only altered the face of society in Punjab but also instigated a need to materially recuperate identity through cultural nationalism. As a result, the succeeding nation of Pakistan has been constantly engaged in visualising a coherent national identity and roots that justify its existence, fluctuating between influences of popular socialism, Islamisation, and military rule's pedagogic dogma—and, currently, religious and cultural radicalisation. However, the Lahore Museum is important here not because of its decolonisation but for possessing the ability to safeguard the ideology of a secular nation in its materiality and so prevent the original vision of Pakistan from simply remaining a cognitive imaginary. This ideological preservation is possible at the Lahore Museum, since it has never totally engaged in abandoning its previous identity; instead, the enduring colonial sedimentation and its collections have been transformed into 'antiquities' conferring cultural capital and prestige on the nation. From the late 1960s onward, the museum introduced elements of Pakistani identity by creating new galleries for its visitors/citizens, which can be thought of as nationalisation to some degree, but it must be remembered that the colonial archive has not permitted a total conversion; national ideology or government agendas could not permeate the museum to remove this accumulation of the museum's past that existed prior to Pakistan itself. This fact alone leaves the Lahore Museum with a strange eclectic feel that somehow feeds into retaining the other colonial label that is equally resilient—the *Ajaib Ghar*. Yet, the Wonder House cannot be deemed a postcolonial failure, because in fact this very quality attracts the curious public to its galleries (Chapters 4 and 5), and for curators possession of the heterodox collections gives a sense of pride that is evident when showing dignitaries/VIPs the vast range of cultural antiquities belonging to Pakistan.

As I have shown, specific political eras brought about their own engagement with the museum, but they are all united in their attempts to create value and give agency to the museum as a subjective space where the 'self' (nation) can be displayed without opposition. The possibility for self-representation and interpretation is ideologically significant for postcolonial museums; however, when visiting the Lahore Museum today, only with difficulty can one evade the colonial Other. The Independence Movement Gallery shouts nationalism, but such

fragments of nationalism exist within the larger colonial shadow that has not been decolonised; it dominates. The political meta-narratives exhibited in the museum are ideologically unambiguous but when placed among the other collections become incomplete signifiers (Bhabha 1994). At best, the decolonisation process at the Lahore Museum has been a type of bricolage, whereby colonial objects have come to loosely connote Pakistani identity and heritage: out of the twenty-two sections, eight¹⁰⁹ can be classified as national, and only three have totally new collections—Independence Movement, Pakistan Postage Stamps, and Contemporary Crafts; although others may have been added to, they all rely on colonial objects and modes of display. The postcolonial prescription fails to remove ambiguity of meaning for the majority of collections at the Lahore Museum, especially if one projects Pakistani identity singularly around Islamic culture and history.

In this respect, there is no linear progression from colonial to postcolonial representation as predicted by Euro-American museology; the colonial archive is stubbornly untranslatable. Instead, there is an accretion of new meanings on the same objects, with the national being another layer on the museum palimpsest. I have tried to show that if the postcolonial label is understood in conjunction with the sociopolitical reality surrounding the museum, then the likes of the Lahore Museum are not harbourers of dust but complex institutions where history and politics are more than representational narratives. The postcolonial Lahore Museum is revealed to be recursive and operating in an in-between space following the fracturing events of Partition, which as yet are not beyond living memory and do not easily or clearly separate the colonial and national.

I remember that, on my first day of research at the Lahore Museum, I was quickly made aware of an event in its history whose recollection evinced strong feelings of possessiveness that museums hold for *their* objects, explicitly said to ‘belong’ to them, their society, and their nation. These views prevail especially if part of a collection or a prized object is displaced, as occurred for the Lahore Museum during its transformation into a postcolonial museum. It was when Mrs. Nusrat Ali¹¹⁰ asked if I had ever visited the museum in Chandigarh that I realised the pertinence of Partition for the Lahore Museum. Unfortunately, I was to disappoint her, since at the time I had not visited it, and this reply seemed to dash hopes of hearing about objects in that museum. I was intrigued to find out why she had shown such zeal in asking me about the museum in Chandigarh when most people usually enquired after Western museums. At that time, I did not fully comprehend the significance of Mrs. Ali’s query, and it was only later that the reasons behind her interest materialised. As it turned out, it was an attempt on

her behalf to access information—an effort to delve into the current use of what she subsequently referred to as once part of ‘our’ collections, which at the time of Partition were handed over to India. Usually accessioning of museum objects, considered as moments of growth, dominate research on museum collections and displays; yet here I was presented with the reverse process of de-accession, an area much less focused on when it can be equally motivated by political and cultural events, as was the case for the Lahore Museum during Punjab’s Partition.

At one level, this was innocent questioning, however, as it transpired, it was a fundamental desire to suture old relationships with objects that in the past belonged to the Lahore Museum but now exist only as part of its historical memory.¹¹¹ What struck me most about this encounter was the personal connection and longing for the objects that Mrs. Ali termed ‘part our collections,’ which paradoxically are still somehow seen as an extension of the Lahore Museum, its ‘inalienable possessions’ (Weiner 1992) that were alienated and now exist as part of a new set of cultural and political frameworks. It seems that the division of objects, like Partition itself, left a scar on the memory of the museum just as on society and for the Lahore Museum engenders sentiments of loss and conceptual incompleteness of what would otherwise be a whole museum—its museumised aporia. The persona of the Lahore Museum as a cultural symbol of the nation was ‘written’ alongside the birth of Pakistan, amid the political and cultural upheaval of colonialism’s end, and, ominously, ideologically Pakistan still exists as transcendent truths that are currently being fractured from within—but the Lahore Museum’s postcolonial narratives and existence are not so bleak, since they inherently contain possible visions of a Pakistani nation that is a moderate Islamic state accepting of its cultural heterogeneity—past and present.

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Chapter 3

MUSEUM ARCHONS¹

The Habitual Discourse of the Lahore Museum



[The Lahore Museum's] benefits are that [the museum] imparts education to students and visitors. They educate themselves in seeing the artefacts and seeing the way of life of the past peoples. So I also feel it is an international heritage; you know people and visitors visit it and come to know of our civilisation. It is educational, and the Lahore Museum is fulfilling this.

—Dr. Niazi (Director–Lahore Museum)²

THE MATERIAL ARCHIVE

The material assets of the Lahore Museum—its collections—are not only displayed for the visitors but also form an archive on which the attentions of the curators and staff are permanently fixed. Preservation, security, and maintenance overtly focus on caring for the objects, but what is overwhelmingly explicit is the curators' protective attitude toward the objects as cultural property and archive, which *they* must sustain and give order to as a whole within the parameters of their institutional duties. Objects in the museum are subject to ideological narratives—colonial or postcolonial; however, they are also the mainstay of the habitual discourse on museum practice. The Lahore Museum's curators reserve the right to use and reveal the collections as they see fit in response to institutional constraints, training, funding, or simply personal preferences. In an effort to move away from a wholly static undertaking of museum practice whereby such practice ends up being

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a set of display or management strategies, I address the museum as a *working* institution, a living social and cultural technology. This angle should not be taken as an indication of or judgment about the success of the museum's working practices but rather as an evocation of the institution's existence/presence in a non-Western museum culture.

The processual actuality of museums is often absent in discussions, as Handler and Gable (1997) notice, but an examination of museum praxis can reveal an institution's habitual discourse and politics within which its action/inaction operates. One way to approach this investigation is to think of the museum as operating within a museo-politik sphere where rhetoric from beyond the museum—local, national, and global—interacts with practical issues and problems faced by the institution, although the ultimate decision to appropriate certain ideas or deem them impractical, even if ideologically attractive, lies with the museum authority. Museological studies have so far eclipsed this backstage of the museum, but it is precisely here that an ethnographic viewpoint (see Butler 2001; Merriman 1996; and Handler and Gable 1997) is most enabling in recovering the real hub of the museum's nerve centre. My attempt here to explicate the different authoritative voices surrounding the contemporary Lahore Museum is implicitly tied up with a need to examine critically the meaning and role that the Eurocentric museology and museum model has for non-Western museum cultures.

The 'New Museology's' (Vergo 1989) intentions to revitalise and critically engage with *the* Museum, unleashing it from its modern roots, in South Asia becomes unhinged. This academic reassessment of museums conceptually and practically has been largely translated into a mode of museology and curatorship that retains the Western museum model at its core; however, when applied uncritically onto the rest of the world, the New Museology verges on becoming another grand narrative like that of the modern museum it seeks to displace. Brian Durrans (1988) obliquely raised this issue when he questioned the cultural specificity of museum change around the world and probed into the relevance of a 'basic model'³ for museums in the Third World. Likewise, Stephen Inglis's short article entitled *Post-Colonial Museums: Dead or Alive?* (1989) reported his experience of attending a Workshop on Museums in Madras, where the common connotation of the word *museum* was thought to have itself become an obstacle to museum growth and development outside the West. Similarly, Martin Pröslér (1996) makes an invective for widening the discourse on global museums while readdressing the lacunae in research of non-Western museums by focusing his attention on the National Museum in Colombo. However, it is frustrating to see that these queries still remain unanswered for South Asian museums, which linger on the periphery of the globalising discourse perpetuated by the

New Museology, becoming almost an alterity when assessed in terms of Western museum theory and practice that are largely unaware of the actuality on the ground of non-Western museums—colonial or postcolonial. A remedy is certainly in order.⁴

Problems exist for postcolonial museology in this critical turn concerning the parameters within which it has so far been situated and applied—as a self-reflexive critique of museum displays in Western museums attempting to expose colonial meta-narratives of control, power, and knowledge. However, museums in South Asia inhabit and operate within the dynamics of postcolonial society, not just representation, and so their focus is not simply on the application of this critical perspective. New Museology even at the level of curation/discourse is not complex or flexible enough to deal with the particular reality that presents itself in South Asia. The main flaw is in the assumption that progress or development is linear and singular—from colonial to postcolonial—when in fact it is more ambiguous, with all kinds of fetters persisting in the transitional zone that is the reality of postcolonial museums.⁵

Rather than starting with a specific museum model/theory, I explore the pragmatic situation that prevails for postcolonial museums such as the Lahore Museum, where ‘progress’ from the colonial archive is not clear-cut and attempts at reinvention suffice as disjunction or a hybrid of colonial and postcolonial under new signs (Chapter 2).⁶ I am pointing here to the situation within postcolonial nations such as India and Pakistan, where the construction of new museums has not effaced colonial-originated institutions that do not wholly subscribe to a postcolonial imagining and so throw up their own set of concerns and controversies. This postcolonial prescription is not so evident within the museumscape of the West,⁷ from which most theoretical and practical museological studies emerge, but it is glaringly obvious when analysis is set within postcolonial South Asia. Here, the privilege to disguise colonial traces or turn them into postmodern irony is not always possible or even desired by the museum. This outcome can be read as a sign of failure to convert the colonial into a self-fashioned identity, but, as in the case of the Lahore Museum, it is a combination of history (Chapter 2) and a global imbalance of resources and cultural exchange that this chapter reveals. Only by attending to the discourses, practitioners, and cultural nexus of non-Western museums can their nuanced existence—as it mediates the local/global—be illuminated and allow for the envisioning of comparative museum models/museologies.

THE LAHORE MUSEUM’S MUSEOLOGY

A significant turning point for the Lahore Museum after the turmoil of Partition (Chapter 2) was the appointment of its first museologist

director, who introduced a sense of professionalism and museological awareness at the museum. In August 1974, Dr. Saifur Rahman Dar was appointed the Lahore Museum's Director; a trained archaeologist, he had previously worked at the Federal Archaeological Department for seventeen years in the museum branch.⁸ His directorship lasted the longest since Partition, spanning almost twenty-four years, and is nostalgically recalled by museum officers as a golden era; even Dr. Dar is aware of his contribution's gravitas:

When I took charge of this museum in 1974, the museum was in an awful position . . . neither the then-director [nor] staff were trained enough. The director was a nonprofessional . . . [and] most of the officers . . . were just young graduates from universities and they had no experience of museum administration. . . . There was unionism and thefts, security and management problems, visitors had no facilities . . . the difficulty when I took over was, there was no vision . . . for the future of the museum and then particularly how to train the staff.⁹

One of the first steps Dr. Dar took after his appointment was to train and motivate an envisioned support team of officers around him: out of the seventeen officers at his disposal, not one had visited any other museum in Pakistan, so the scope for improvement was vast. Dr. Dar wanted to train his staff as well as instil awareness and a sense of pride to create visionary leaders for a museum movement in Pakistan. Such ideals had been considered in Pakistan's museum circles since the 1950s, especially in the Museums Association of Pakistan's journal,¹⁰ which aimed to 'advance the cause and improve the work of existing Museums all over the country and to establish close contacts between these Museums and the general public on the one hand and the International Council of Museums organised by UNESCO on the other.'¹¹ Many of the journal articles chased after the ideal model, which was invariably based on Western museums, but by now, it should be obvious that such an ideal had little impact on the Lahore Museum; in the mid-1970s it was still grappling with basics of museum management, reorganisation, and development of new galleries without a trained staff force ([Chapter 2](#)).

Dr. Dar, unlike his recent predecessors, was then not interested in only rearranging the collections; he was also attentive to what he saw as the Lahore Museum's primary need at that time—namely, museum-minded staff. With the support of the Chairman and the Punjab Government, Dr. Dar was able to get financial assistance from foreign agencies such as the Ford Foundation and the Asian Cultural Council for training purposes; more than this, he was on the lookout for suitable staff. Dr. Dar managed to entice former colleagues from the Department

of Archaeology and graduates from Peshawar University, such as the current Keeper of Pre-Islamic Collections, Miss Humera Alam, recalling that:

I got a very good team of officers in the museum and I am fortunate that I managed to send almost all of them to get their training and get their vision broadened by visiting different museums . . . [and most experienced] the services rendered by modern museums in . . . UK and Germany and America. . . . They returned fully prepared for their new responsibilities and so within the given resources we had, resources are always a major problem in this country, they had done maximum what they could do and with their assistance and help I was able to build up, or rather re-build, the image of the museum . . . [by] reorganising several galleries and even opened some new galleries and we updated our documentation system.¹²

In September 1979, this concern for the absence of training facilities was directly confronted when for the first time a Training Course in Museology was held in Pakistan at the Lahore Museum. Issues of museum management, administration, conservation and preservation, education, exhibition, documentation, and research were addressed in lectures¹³ delivered during the nineteen-day course conducted by Dr. Grace Morley¹⁴ and attended by thirty-eight participants from twenty different Pakistani institutions. Dr. Dar set the syllabus, with lectures being complemented by ‘technical lessons,’ practical implementation of which was evidenced in three temporary exhibitions curated by the participants—*The Raga and Ragini Themes in Pahari Paintings*, *Lithic Tools of the Soan Valley*, and *Punch-Marked Coins*. This course was attended by four recent Lahore Museum staff, one being Mrs. Ali, who remembered the course as ‘fruitful’ and useful owing to Dr. Morley’s expertise in South Asian museums and awareness of their specific predicaments.

The Lahore Museum was finally immersing itself in addressing its museological and training requirements through Dr. Dar’s attentiveness and desire to reactivate the museum as a vibrant cultural body. This investment in the museum was applied practically in another area that had been significantly overlooked in the running of the museum—the introduction of a modern system of object documentation, which simultaneously delegated accountability and responsibility of collections to respective staff. Dr. Dar was trying to consign order and reconstruct the Lahore Museum from basics, rather than repeat previous attempts whereby nonprofessionals with little museological knowledge blindly directed proceedings. In a similar way to Ejaz Ali (Chapter 2), Dr. Dar described the disorder he confronted: ‘[previous staff] had pull[ed] down everything from the showcases which had been on display for 80 years . . . [they] dump[ed] everything in the centre and . . . all of a sudden

all the things were just piled on top of each other so that the new registers and the old accession numbers were lost . . . and this is still a problem.’¹⁵

The confusion and disorder deepened further when accession numbers from old registers dating back to 1864 were discontinued after 1964 and new numbers allocated ad hoc. To alleviate such inconsistencies in the museum record, Dr. Dar set up a centralised documentation system. Although this was a step in the right direction in terms of monitoring object movement in and out of the museum, the extent of the problem can be appreciated from the fact that during Dr. Dar’s tenure he was able to redocument only the entire Gandhara collection (illus. 28)¹⁶ and sixty percent of the Coins collection.

Dr. Dar’s determination to update the Lahore Museum’s museological outlook is further exemplified in another development, a first for any Pakistani museum, the launching of the *Lahore Museum Bulletin* in 1988, to which it was compulsory for Gallery In-Charges to contribute regularly. Through these small measures, Dr. Dar introduced elements of museology and professionalism into the management and habitual discourse of the Lahore Museum. Although a new work standard was set, Dr. Dar was not able to resolve all the museum’s problems during his time, and many persist even today.



28 Gandhara *Jataka* of the Great Renunciation (second century C.E.)

In April 1998, Dr. Dar retired and was replaced by the Deputy Director, Dr. Anjum Rehmani—a fitting successor who had joined the Lahore Museum in 1973, having been trained at several foreign museums.¹⁷ Dr. Rehmani was Director from 1998 to 2001, when his position was abruptly terminated owing to theft at the Lahore Museum.¹⁸ Although Director for a relatively short space of time, the museum benefited greatly from his presence, as he maintained the work ethic inculcated by Dr. Dar while being aware of the persisting problems in Pakistani museums. Dr. Rehmani continued to incorporate and apply museological standards he had observed while abroad, and he inspired his staff to do the same in their own gallery displays and collection reorganisation. In proposing improved security, he called for an improvement in the physical verification and documentation of objects. Reminiscent of the colonial era, funding and space remained major problems for the Lahore Museum and prevented the creation of new galleries, so, some collections were upgraded—the Islamic Gallery, Independence Movement, and Pakistan Postage Stamps. One of Dr. Rehmani's major contributions was a project financed by UNESCO that resulted in the publication *Masterpieces of the Lahore Museum* (1999), which was seen as a crucial venture for the museum to promote its 'showpieces' in alliance with a prestigious global heritage organisation. More of a coffee-table book¹⁹ than a museum guide, it nevertheless offered positive global exposure to the Lahore Museum.

With this publication, Dr. Rehmani showed clear interest in raising the profile of the Lahore Museum on a global scale, while at the local level he advanced ideas around reestablishing the Friends of the Lahore Museum programme to target a wider public and foster links between the local community and the museum:

[I wanted] people to become interested in this museum, tell the wealthy and the educated through our Friends of the Lahore Museum programme, as well as the general public that this museum is yours. Inform them that I am not its owner, nor [are] the people [in Lahore], but the owners of this museum are all of us together with the rest of the world. . . . If all people are involved in this way then the museum can provide a good service for which it was developed; instead of people just working, getting paid, and going home, there will be contribution to society and knowledge, . . . a community link which is non-existent.²⁰

The idea of an accessible and attentive museum operating as a social institution for and among the community was new and intended to expand the museum's role beyond its four walls. Despite positive overtones, Dr. Rehmani's final comments about the non-existent connection between the museum and its audience placed the onus squarely on those

working at the museum to cultivate interaction between these two vital pieces of the museum—staff and audience (Chapter 4). Suffice to say for now that Dr. Rehmani's community consciousness marked another subtle change and potential development for the Lahore Museum along museologically informed lines; however, with the incident of a manuscript theft, his influence was cut short and, despite clearance following an investigation, led to impending uncertainty at the museum as it came once again under the guidance of nonprofessionals—the bureaucrats.

The bureaucratic takeover of the museum was firmly in place when Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi²¹ became Director in mid-2001. His training in public administration made him suitable for management, although he was swift to affirm his cultural credentials:

First of all the Director is an administrator; then since I am an author of books on Islamic history and culture I do not feel any difficulty in dealing with the artefacts and art history. [Museum] training is useful and if I had training abroad that would be useful. . . . I was sent here by the Government, but having come here I feel that this is a very good job, there is a lot of variety and you learn about art and culture plus about the museum and cultural heritage. . . . I have no difficulty in my job.²²

Paucity of museum knowledge did not hinder Dr. Niazi from taking interest beyond administration of the Lahore Museum, and he introduced many measures to improve the museum's security and quality of visitor experience, including brighter gallery lighting, better labels, a canteen, and increased advertising of the museum's activities—particularly the nascent educational programme in the media and among colleges and universities. Dr. Niazi also took the tightening of security²³ in and around the museum as a personal challenge: 'I am responsible for the safety of the artefacts.'²⁴ Some of his other ideas on improving the museum can be traced to suggestions bandied about by previous directors, such as the desire to resuscitate the Friends of Lahore Museum programme and develop a museology course taught at the museum. Although the Lahore Museum has been previously managed by administrators-*cum*-museologists, the presence of bureaucrats is generally interpreted as regressive not only in terms of relevant expertise but also in undermining the museum's autonomous character. Dr. Dar, though hesitant at first, was vocal in expressing his disgruntled, yet adamant, view that the dichotomy of professionals versus nonprofessionals was a major issue for museum development in Pakistan. He stated: 'The problem I have noticed over the years, and it is still happening, is that bureaucrats instead of keeping to what they can do, they also try and become museum professionals of which they have no understanding or comprehension. This . . . creates a lot of trouble for the museums . . . [and is] a source of disruption and actually prevents progress.'²⁵

So far, I have confined analysis to the main authority figure in the Lahore Museum—the Director; however, other voices need to interject from within and beyond the museum if a holistic habitual discourse is to be presented here. It is also necessary to comprehend whether the museum is an ‘island’ institution cut off from other cultural bodies and ideas; thus we need to investigate how other institutions affect the thoughts and work of the curators. Examination of this wider context of the museum in contemporary Lahore and Pakistan will further socialise it and reveal the postcolonial predicament of the museum and its links—both existent and non-existent—to global/local cultural organisations that inform the work and discourse of museum staff.

THE (UN)SOCIALISED MUSEUM: HABITUAL DISCOURSE AND MUSEOPOLITIK

The institution of a museum not only is manipulated and moulded into new forms internally by negotiating political, economic, and social stances but is also part of networks mediated by other cultural and museum organisations. These bodies usually take the form of museum associations (global and national) that act as umbrella organisations and platforms bringing museums into contact with one another and enabling dissemination of policies and information within the museum community. At one level, this network operates to develop and enhance a ‘museal consciousness’ (Crane 2000), whereby the museum sensibility and ability to collect, order, and preserve/memorialise/objectify information spreads both globally and locally.

Thus I ask to what degree is the Lahore Museum socialised in relation to this wider museum community—or to what degree is it more a case of museum dysfunction? The interaction of the Lahore Museum with other organisations equally concerns wider issues of development, projection of a museum image, and the general status of museums and museology within Pakistan. As Dr. Rehmani stated:

Awareness—now this is an important issue for museums today; I mean you have the objects, but they are scattered all over the place, some are being destroyed, others smuggled out, so people need to be made aware that this is our heritage, a generation’s heritage, and it is our duty not only to preserve it, transmit it for the future, but also take pride in it. It is our asset and our children’s also, and if we don’t have this, then what will the future be—we need this foundation . . . and build on this . . .²⁶

Global Consciousness

Two organisations that are seen to epitomise attempts at unifying museum activity at this level are UNESCO and ICOM,²⁷ with the former

attempting to apply global themes²⁸ to the local context. In discussing the role of UNESCO in relation to Pakistani museums, I was informed by Shahid Rajpoot Ahmad (National Programme Officer–Culture)²⁹ that the organisation’s presence exists in a limited capacity as part of UNESCO’s main objective to promote a positive image of Pakistan abroad—part of which might include collaborative publication with the Lahore Museum. Mr. Ahmad suggested that museums of Pakistan were incorporated into a project being planned during my research, entitled *Culture, Cultural Heritage, and Tourism in Pakistan*.³⁰ This project involved the Peshawar and Punjab Departments of Archaeology promoting the heritage of Pakistan, including in museums, and cultivating a positive image for potential domestic tourism. For UNESCO, Pakistani museums are useful under the rubric of cultural tourism, since it aims to preserve and simultaneously to commoditise cultural heritage on the global stage; within this project, the Lahore Museum is specifically mentioned only as part of the Punjab tourism programme.

Currently UNESCO makes no other investment in the Lahore Museum’s actual exhibits or their preservation. Such insufficient connection and commitment become more apparent when one considers that the majority of staff at the museum were either not aware of UNESCO’s activities or did not consider them to have any effect on their work.³¹ Miss Naushaba Anjum (Keeper of Coins) adamantly stated: ‘On my work, nothing . . . not sure about the others in the museum. . . . Yes, it should have an influence . . . we do feel isolated, we have a lack of communication and contact with other museums in Pakistan and abroad.’³² This seclusion is not overcome by the impractical nature of UNESCO’s work for the museum, which is not in need of ideas but sustainable resources,³³ as Mrs. Nusrat Ali related: ‘We do have an awareness of [UNESCO’s] regulations, but they have no right to tell us our problems, we know our problems well and what will work. . . . Say we get funding for air conditioning . . . then, okay, you may get the installation, but what about the maintenance and bills afterward, who will pay those?’³⁴

UNESCO is not alone in being rebuked; ICOM suffers a similar fate more for its lack of activity than irrelevance. The one input that was recalled by Mrs. Nusrat Ali³⁵ between ICOM and the Lahore Museum was the museology course held back in 1979; however, ICOM is given a slight edge in that I was informed that its policies are kept in mind by the museum’s management, particularly when formulating rules and regulations.³⁶ Interestingly, what becomes repeatedly apparent when one examines the significance of these global heritage players in Pakistan is the incongruous nature of global policies at a local level, and, when coupled with Pakistan’s non-evident and critically underdeveloped museum community/network, profitable engagement is denied, and relationships

remain contrived at best. Dr. Dar, who was also General Secretary for ICOM's National Committee in Pakistan for nearly a decade, opined that this was a useful organisation for obtaining training funds, but professional jealousy and self-centredness among members broke down the committee.³⁷ It would seem that domestic museum politics and mistrust also prevent(ed) interaction with global museum/cultural bodies, but, then again, the concepts and ideas promulgated by such organisations do not account for the nuances of museums' existence and their requirements in different sociopolitical settings. Shahbaz Khan (Director General, Department of Archaeology, Government of Punjab), held equally strong views about the ground-effects of international organisations, stating that UNESCO had offered to provide help in relation to museums but only in the form of consultants and committees from anywhere in the world; he explained, almost in unison with Mrs. Ali: 'We know what our problems are, we don't need someone to come and point this out. UNESCO was willing to spend \$6 million on advisors but not on built heritage. What we need is not advice but actual funds to carry out the groundwork.'³⁸ If global museum organisations offer inappropriate and mismatched resources, are national and provincial museum networks any better?

Pakistani Museums/Museology

At the time of Partition, Pakistan was left with sixteen museums in total, with only eight being public museums (Dar 1989). Over the decades, a new array of museums was established, including science and technology, natural history, army, navy, fine arts, and crafts. With the growth in the range and number of museums, the image that Pakistan has only archaeological museums was dispelled, and some in-roads were made toward increasing museum-building projects.³⁹ However, in cataloguing museums of Pakistan, Dar (ibid.) simultaneously reveals the lack of communication and consciousness between institutions by referring to the incomplete nature of the list. In an indirect way, non-interaction presents the actual state of museums and museology in Pakistan even today, and one contributing reason is the way museums are administered, with priority and funds given on the whims of those with power.

At the Federal level of government, Pakistani museums are administered by the Department of Archaeology, unless they are private, university, or autonomous, and although these four categories represent different modes of administration, they do overlap, as in the case of the Lahore Museum.⁴⁰ Museums are funded and managed according to their level, although this division is skewed, since the majority of museums come under the Federal Department of Archaeology's control.

Only after 1987 were provincial offshoots of the Department formed with decentralisation of responsibilities following; however, this process remains incomplete, because provincial branches exist only in two provinces—Punjab⁴¹ and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Punjab Archaeology Department covers three areas—archaeology, museums, and conservation—however, only two museums are under its control—those of Kasur and Bahawalpur.⁴² Despite Mr. Khan being keen for each district in the Punjab to have its own museum, he was aware of acute funds shortage, which is palpable from the fact that only one museum is currently planned for construction in the tourist spot of Kalakhar, Northern Punjab. Mr. Khan soberly stated: ‘plans and designs for improvements and developments can be made, but they are of no use if they cannot be implemented and carried out due to a lack of funding.’⁴³ Development and expansion of museums in the Punjab is desired but not pragmatically executable, so the Lahore Museum remains very much the premier museum of the province.

Mr. Khan felt that it would be beneficial for the Lahore Museum to be under the control of his department, and such may well be the case, but the museum remains autonomous with a Board of Governors⁴⁴ and the Chief Secretary of Punjab as Chairman. Despite the autonomous status, the Lahore Museum is dependent on the Government of Punjab’s substantial annual grant-in-aid through the Information, Culture, and Youth Affairs Department. This financial help allows the museum to function, since it is incapable of supporting its total costs independently; in 2002, the museum generated Rs. 18,47,521 from sales proceeds but received Rs. 94,81,500 in aid to make up the deficit in actual costs. The museum’s dependency on the Punjab Government is clear and shows how little room exists for formulating a development or acquisitions budget. This large-scale financial input by the government brings into question the autonomous nature of the museum’s decisions, and Dr. Niazi was unambiguous about this influence, stating that the government, as much as the Board of Governors, was a major player in decisions about running the museum.⁴⁵ Fakir Syed Aijazzudin,⁴⁶ a member of the Board of Governors since 1980, was equally clear about the government’s role:

the museum . . . will always be dependent upon the intelligence of the bureaucrats. . . . The interest that they have [varies] . . . some secretaries are very avant-garde, progressive, some are not. They have constituted a board all right, which ostensibly is supposed to act independently, but the chairman is the Chief Secretary, okay, and a number of people there are bureaucrats from the department of finance, culture, archaeology, etcetera.⁴⁷

This organisational setup pertaining to autonomy may be unique to the Lahore Museum, but it also indicates the inadequate structural

support for the museum, leaving it suspended in a socialisation/network of scarce communication among national, provincial, and local museums; so perhaps it is better to say that so far the Lahore Museum is (un) socialised at both local and global levels.

Museums in Pakistan operate in relative isolation from one another, thus limiting the scope for a meaningful museum platform to be established whereby problems can be raised, ideas exchanged, and discussion toward developing a museum consciousness that can create recognition of museums at policy level. This present situation is comparable to that of the late 1970s, when Dr. Dar (1977, 1981) wrote about the problematics encountered by museology and museums in Pakistan; with so little progress having been made, Dr. Dar reaffirmed to me:

I don't think any of the problems have been solved, except [that] some new museums are coming up; but it is, rather, we can call it a departmental approach, the national approach, or the national policy on museums that should be there but is still not forthcoming. For example, there is still not a single historical museum in the country at present . . . no true ethnological museum in the country . . . no original museums or local museums about local history where the city government should be responsible. The planning that comes with policy making is still absent. If a chief officer thinks 'Oh there should be an Air Force museum,' then there it is. If some folklorist thinks there should be a museum, then there it is; or if an art person or council wants something in Islamabad as a showpiece, then they make an art gallery there, but not as a result of a very well laid-out policy . . . basically speaking because there is no cultural policy. In the eyes of the government culture is at [a] very low level of their priorities.⁴⁸

The sporadic and incoherent nature of museum and policy formation along with minimal investment⁴⁹ into what is considered a low priority sector are the foremost causes in museum underachievement in Pakistan. Nobody at the Lahore Museum ever referred to a museum policy that was adhered to or used as a guiding framework, and even when I questioned the Director, he vaguely mentioned that it was about national cultural heritage. All these deficiencies are symptomatic of political mismanagement and disinterest among bureaucrats and authority figures placed in charge of museums to project cultural identity, history, and national integration through this institution.⁵⁰ Museums hold a precarious position for policy makers and administrators, as well as museologists, owing to the lack of professionalism in dealing with and understanding their value and needs,⁵¹ except in relation to archaeology, which occupies a popular niche association as indicated by the reactions I got from most people when I told them about my research: 'So you're interested in ancient cultures and archaeology.' Perhaps this

is not surprising, because many people working in museums have a background in archaeology and so further cement the image of museums as representing only antiquity.⁵² This position of the museum in Pakistan prevents greater expansion and diversification in the role museums can play in society as well as inspiring administration to develop dynamic, coherent policies and fund projects that engage and popularise museum activity.

Weak cultural policies leave little room for any sort of pan-Pakistan museum organisation or movement, and when attempts to set up such communication forums between museums have been made, they have largely failed less so through lack of participation, more so through rife professional bickering. I often enquired among the Lahore Museum staff about any active museums network in Pakistan to which they/museum belonged; the answer was always negative and that perhaps once there was an association but no one was sure of its existence now. This reaction does not mean that the desire for collaboration between the Lahore Museum and other museums was absent; most staff were of the opinion that such interaction and museum organisations should exist, although previous experiences make it highly improbable. One of the first organisations to be set up was the aforementioned Museums Association of Pakistan in the 1950s. However, like other associations, this now exists in name only; Dr. Dar, one-time General Secretary of the Association, blamed its demise on ‘parochial feelings’⁵³ that emanated among some members who claimed there was a bias toward the Punjab,⁵⁴ and such power-politics prevented cultural discussion, causing members to leave. The Association’s fate is similar to that suffered by both the committee for ICOM and The Pakistan Society of Archaeology and Museums that was set up in 1989; today neither has any palpable presence.

This unfortunate reality is the outcome of uncommitted or helpless museum professionals, who it seems, are more interested in rivalry in the midst of an unstable sociopolitical environment that negates the progress and advancement of a unified front for museums in Pakistan. Knowledge of this background gives nuanced understanding and insights into the predicaments faced by museums such as the Lahore Museum in postcolonial South Asia, which can easily be labelled as dysfunctional containers of dust. The circumstances that I have alluded to, at both global and local levels, determine the context within and extent to which the Lahore Museum performs, where the museum cannot afford to be singularly utopian but is affected by the sociopolitics of the society it inhabits. However, it is time to encounter the Lahore Museum’s own professionals—the Gallery In-Charges—and explore their habitual praxis and discourse as part of museopolitik.

Habitual Praxis and Discourse

What needs to be elucidated now, by lending a voice to their thoughts, is the unique relationship between the museum and museum producers. The organisational structure of the Lahore Museum is headed by the Board of Governors, then Director, next Deputy Director, and then the Administration, Technical, and Collections and Research sections. Curators, or Gallery In-Charges as they are known at the Lahore Museum, are in the last category and consist of a mixture of Keepers and Research Officers. There is no specific area—vocational or academic—from which officers are recruited, the main criteria being a Master's education in preferred subjects such as archaeology, history, or fine arts; however, this preference is flexible and sometimes results in a mismatch of educational background and actual post. The distinction between Keeper and Research Officer is based on seniority and years of service at the museum rather than any real differentiation in job description or duties, although this situation does manifest itself as deference by the latter toward the former in terms of status and expertise.

It is interesting to note the reasons why Gallery In-Charges choose the museum as a profession, which largely fall into three main categories: the first being a natural progression from their academic background, especially for those in archaeology, exemplified by Mr. Mujeeb Khan (General Gallery and Arms and Armoury Gallery), who stated that the attraction was 'just because my educational background is in archaeology, MA Archaeology, so the most relevant place for me was the museum.'⁵⁵ This assumed natural linkage between museums and archaeology was likewise referred to by Miss Humera Alam (Keeper, Pre-Islamic Collections), who also trained in archaeology; however, others seemed to have joined the museum by just applying for any job. In this second category, individuals had no clear intentions behind their choice, although once recruited they gained interest. Miss Naushaba Anjum (Keeper, Coins Gallery) said that just as she had finished her Master's in history, a post was advertised for someone in history, so she 'just applied,' despite having no real preference for it; subsequently, she developed a great interest in her work.⁵⁶ Mrs. Nusrat Ali (Keeper, Fine Arts Gallery) had a similar entry into the Lahore Museum, with a Master's in fine arts. She recalled:

At first no such attraction, and frankly to tell you the truth I had never wanted to visit the museum, even though I studied just across the road. . . . I just gave an interview, as [the job advertisement] asked for an MA in fine arts. I did not know what it involved at all. . . . I was chosen and employed as a Display Officer . . . then once I started, I worked whole heartedly and that is why I have been here thirty-one years.⁵⁷

For Mrs. Ali, her fine arts background was directly applicable to the gallery work she was put in charge of, and so there was some overlap; but for others this lucky conjunction is missing. One Gallery In-Charge was brutally honest about his employment:

In our society there is one problem, that we need a job, and this is the reason why our institutions don't progress, as we are simply searching for a job, and this is not in terms of our subject area . . . [a] person who should be at a school is at the museum, and the person who should be in the museum is elsewhere . . . [laughs] basically I am not right for this post, this is not where I should be. I should be in some college . . . I am here to earn *roti-rozi* [a living].

A government wage is an attractive feature of a museum job and a major pull factor, since it offers stability and a regular income in a country where nepotism and red tape rather than merit secure even meagre jobs. It is not all doom for the museum, since the third category includes those who desire to work at the museum as a chosen vocation: among them are Mr. Ishfaq Cheema (Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery and Contemporary Crafts Gallery), whose interest in researching history and archaeology led him to choose the museum,⁵⁸ and Mrs. Zarina Khurshid (Keeper, Ethnological Collections), who joined the museum in 1975 as a public relations officer after receiving her Master's in fine arts. She recalled: 'Actually, I had a great interest in joining the *museum* because of history and art; also . . . I was interested in teaching . . . and contact with the public.'⁵⁹ Perhaps the lack of a definition pertaining to the museum professional's role allows for the wrong people being in the wrong job, which can lead to a disparity between individual expectations and one's work or being placed in charge of the 'wrong' gallery. However, this exclusive focus on the academic qualification of an officer bypasses a crucial area of expertise—that of museological training.

The issue of training in museum methods is a grey area as far as in-house training is concerned at the Lahore Museum, with no formal programme or even assessment. Once again, the only officers who have had exposure to ideas of museology and curatorial techniques are those trained in archaeology. Miss Humera Alam stated: 'In our archaeology Masters . . . one area was on museology . . . Once I came to the museum, I got a basic introduction, but since I had come from that background it was no big problem for me.'⁶⁰ Miss Alam was also fortunate to benefit from training abroad by attending a course in museum management at the V&A in 1998. But what is the plight of those who were/are new to this area? Most of the officers at the museum claimed they did not receive any kind of formal training when they joined; it was more a

case of learn-on-the-job and remains so. Mrs. Nusrat Ali recalled her experience thirty-one years ago:

No, I had no specific training when I came here for a job . . . but through self-training you do learn a bit, but it is time consuming. If you are initially given training at the start then you can build on this further, so you can say this is a lack in our ways. But at least now the new recruits have senior officers like me . . . and so they have the opportunity to learn from us, and we can teach them . . . it is my utmost wish to tell others about my section and work, as I have noticed not everyone is willing to share . . . if I had had training it would have been much better. I do not repent it though, as I have learnt a lot by myself.⁶¹

One of the key modes of introducing the museum and providing training is through a type of shadowing, whereby the new recruit spends a certain amount of time with each senior officer learning about his or her section and gaining a general idea of how the museum operates, as Mr. Shoaib Ahmed commented:

We have no training as such, and I had none. No courses or anything like that; instead there is the *desi* [local] method of teaching that is popular, where you go to the gallery and spend three hours a day and look around and examine the objects, and if you have any questions, then you either go to the library or ask a senior, that's all.⁶²

This unsatisfactory and unstructured training does not bode well for creating museological uniformity or staff awareness and is exacerbated by the fact that there is little on-going teamwork and exchange among officers, captured in Miss Naushaba Anjum's comment: 'I just know about my field, not about the museum.'⁶³ The museum's management appears unaffected by such state of affairs, and, despite many admissions that better training was required, no real initiatives or changes were forthcoming within or beyond the museum at other institutions.⁶⁴ To some extent, this disinterest in improving training methods and facilities is understood if one takes a look at the actual work that officers are sanctioned to do.

All officers, no matter what rank, are entrusted with a similar set of basic duties that they must perform. Although each may emphasise or prefer one aspect to another, the overall responsibilities encompass research, maintaining a record of collections, guiding VIPs, twice-daily gallery visits to assess observance of order—of objects and guards—and annual contributions to the *Lahore Museum Bulletin*. An officer's daily routine distinctly separates gallery work from that of the office, and most officers place greater importance on their research than on spending time in the gallery, since they envisage their role primarily in terms

of being researchers. On average, officers told me that they spend about an hour in the gallery every day, since little alters in the actual gallery displays—the majority of exhibits are permanent and there is minimal rotation with objects in the reserve collection; however, if a specific task⁶⁵ had to be undertaken, then they would spend more than an hour. Other reasons given for this disengagement with the galleries included a shortage of space for expansion and of funds to revitalise displays, although another factor involved issues of security and responsibility rather than curatorial guardianship of objects. Mr. Shoaib Ahmed pointed to this fact when he stated that officers should be made to spend more time in their respective galleries to expose themselves to their own collections and the public's needs, but then he quickly countered this by admitting that amid the backdrop of theft at the museum, officers feared becoming too involved with objects:

I would want to end our guard type role because this is the one thing that prevents us officers from working. I am not sure if anyone else will tell you or not, but if you ask the officers, especially the seasoned ones, they will tell you the amount of tension this causes. . . . When we leave to go home, there are armed policemen and security in the museum during the night, and despite this if at night a robbery takes place, the Gallery In-Charge is still held responsible. . . . If officers have to make ten rounds or as now have to count in the morning and afternoon the number of items in a gallery, then what research will they do?⁶⁶

It seems the real differentiation is between research and gallery work; the two are not allocated equal importance in the Gallery In-Charge's duties, and each time research is championed as proper work, preference is given to the authority of the office over the reality of the gallery. Maybe gallery work is also avoided, since it directly confronts the officers' inability to improve displays to the standards they envisage or observe on trips to museums abroad; another factor might be visitors' so-called inappropriate behaviour (Chapter 4). Ironically, however, it is not research on material collections that enables officers to feel pride but in being 'owners' of prized pieces, as Miss Humera Alam claimed: 'Our museum, collection-wise—maybe we do not have many funds so that we can update the museum, and its displays are not the best, but collection-wise it is a very good museum, especially for Gandhara, coins, miniature paintings . . . we have many unique pieces.'⁶⁷

This statement poignantly recalls the centrality and essentialisation of objects and collections, whereby the archon (Derrida 1996:2) gains authority and prestige through maintaining an ordered archive. With this background we can better understand the dilemmas faced by museums such as the Lahore Museum and its In-Charges, who are bounded

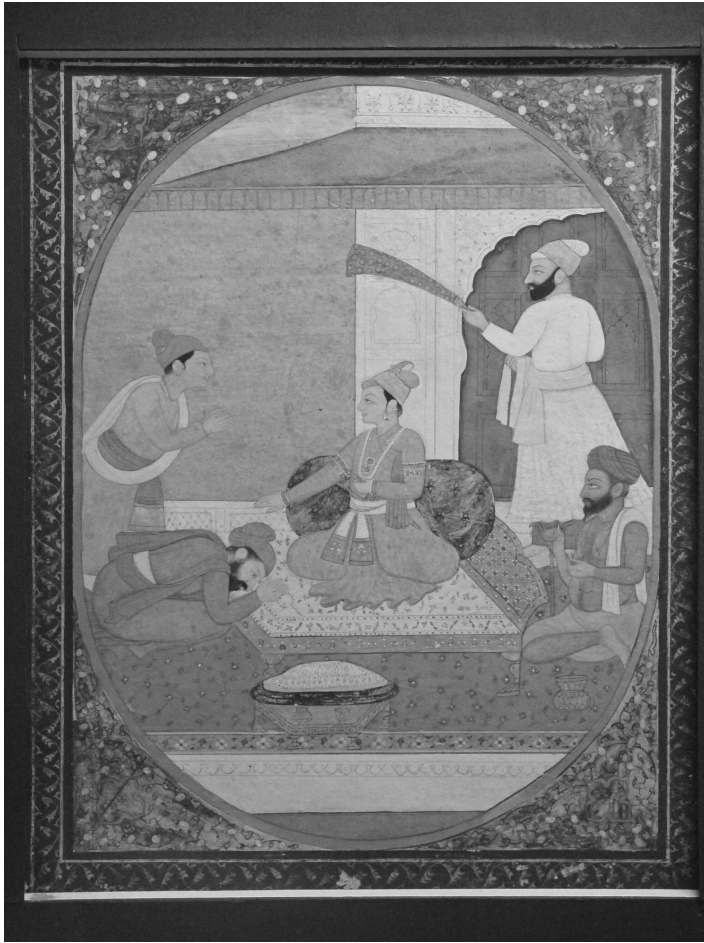
by the inability to make real changes, not by reason of ignorance or lack of knowledge of appropriate measures but rather by lack of resources and inadequate training to meet their needs. Therefore, at times when this inactivity is taken to be a sign of indolence, a broader view focusing on habitual praxis/discourse illuminates a myriad of factors—enabling and constraining—that contribute to this reality, which are further exemplified in the officers’ desired or perceived role for their museum in society.

Educating Heritage

Museums have recently had to provide justifications for their existence, actions, and contribution to society; consequentially, they increasingly direct their attention and activities toward interaction with and among respective communities.⁶⁸ To assess the Lahore Museum’s sense of social responsibility toward the communities it serves—of Lahorites, Pakistanis, and global tourists, and specifically the subcommunity of students who are deemed vital to the museum’s success as an educational institution—I briefly examine how In-Charges envisage this interaction. The impression cultivated of the museum in the guided tours, leaflets, introductions to VIPs, and presentations to groups of students at educational events is that the museum is a heritage site exhibiting Pakistan’s distinctive antiquities (*illus.* 29). This classification provides a specific gloss for the museum that endeavours to place it in the league of other great museums that preserve national heritage for the future as part of the global community of civilisations. Mrs. Nusrat Ali captured this image when she stated that the museum’s purpose was

to try [to] show the public our heritage in a chronological order starting from Moenjodaro, and if we take paintings, the earliest miniature is here from 1510 A.D. . . . showing the different steps of art, and at the end we have twentieth-century miniatures on ivory that were introduced by the Europeans. Then there is the contemporary art section of the pioneers of [Pakistani] art . . . also like in Gandhara there is the world’s unique piece the Fasting Buddha, Miracle of Saraswati . . . [that] people come to see from all over the world. So this fits the definition of a museum, as it has antiquities, has the antique touch of old things in terms of art, craft, manuscripts, coins. . . . Our cultural heritage is shown here through art and history represented in the objects . . . just like in other museums of the world.⁶⁹

Mrs. Ali’s notion of the museum is one that squarely associates it with global definitions of cultural heritage and civilisational history, but it does not fully expose the main perception the museum aspires to in serving its immediate community—as an educator.



29 Miniature painting of Guru Har Krishan Ji and attendants (Guler School, eighteenth century)

The Lahore Museum envisions itself as an educational institution and hopes to educate visitors in some capacity, as Miss Humera Alam pointed out: ‘In my mind I think it is a place of education and this should be highlighted as basically it is an educational institution.’⁷⁰ Surprisingly then, no one was clear in specifying his or her own part in trying to educate, almost as if the museum should do this automatically, although Mrs. Zarina Khurshid suggested an educational plan:

We should invite children and tell them properly what is kept here so that in the future they can pass this on . . . this will be progress . . . we can also

make some more artefacts mobile, so they are taken to villages; if those people cannot come here, then we can take this to them, but only if we have proper security.⁷¹

Even though officers acknowledge that an educational element is crucial in developing a positive role and exposure for the museum in society, they claim that the task is riddled with difficulty and a major obstacle to their work, in particular in dealing with the so-called *unpar* ('illiterate') visitors (Chapter 4). This sentiment is widespread among the staff, who consider the problem to be a result of social problems such as illiteracy,⁷² which prevent the museum from serving its community in the desired way. Mr. Mujeeb Khan referenced this factor:

The role the museum should play—it is not doing so. But the museum can only play a part where there is education and interest among the public. They have curiosity and want to learn and understand, . . . [but] I am stressing education and a low literacy rate as reasons why we cannot work properly. To make the museum more active we will have to raise the literacy rate and create interest in Pakistan.⁷³

What is intriguing in all of this is the way the officers are actually unwilling to see themselves as part of the problem—by not being aware of their own public. When thinking about the museum's public role—despite being alert to their own conditions as part of a postcolonial society—officers crave a museum that functions as the ideal museum, essentially the Western model, as a bastion of culture and informal education where no one leaves empty-minded. The Lahore Museum is aware that many changes can be made to increase its educational value and environment, such as space, funds, training, expertise, publications, and better internal communication between officers; yet, the one thing that is consistently missed or ignored is that the museum also needs to know its public's expectations (Chapter 4). Only Mr. Shoaib Ahmed referred to this need on a defiant note, summarising what I think is the most accurate image of the Lahore Museum today, problems and all:

The thing is, what is the benefit and what should be the benefit?—and there is a great difference between the two. Here what we do is concentrate on what should be and not on what actually is. And one of my strongest beliefs is that for an uneducated society like ours there is no benefit of a museum; . . . of course there should be, it should be that our students learn a lot from the museum—school children, college students, and our society, our religious people should learn what happened to other nations and cultures, our artisans should come and see what sort of work was done before machinery and learn from this. This is a totally educational affair, which in other words should have a role in any

living society . . . which we do not have here. . . . The reason is that we have other problems, we do not have enough food, we do not get the opportunity to cross the road, our honour is not secure . . . we do not have respect for each other, honour is money, no safety, so what will you do with education?⁷⁴

However, the picture is not quite so bleak; the museum's public appropriate and consume the museum avidly (Chapter 4) with intense visual engagement (Chapter 5). But one sector of the community that the Lahore Museum actively encourages to visit is students. Perhaps this is because students are envisaged as possessing the right educational capital to develop a taste for and utilise the museum 'correctly'—so, let us turn to the museum's educational activities.

TOURS, TEXTS, LECTURES, AND QUIZZES

The Lahore Museum wants to attract and engage educated learners—in particular, students from schools and colleges in Lahore, the Punjab, and beyond—by implementing activities and events that offer an educational museum experience. Despite the prominence of education as a primary *raison d'être* for the Lahore Museum in its staff's rhetoric, there is no education department or officer in charge of running educational programmes; instead, the two APROs—Mr. Asim Rizwan and Mrs. Fouzia Kanvil⁷⁵—were responsible for the majority of the activities. The absence of a single in-charge unit means that it is difficult to evaluate a specific educational policy, and this situation is accentuated by the fact that many educational initiatives originate randomly from the Director's office. The APROs deal with the public aspect and on occasion are aided by Gallery In-Charges—for instance, during visits by a delegation⁷⁶ or an elite school, but generally the latter are reluctant⁷⁷ to help, seeing such assistance as beyond their job description and preferring their displays to speak for them. This reluctance is most apparent for guided tours, which form the core of educational activities, to which we turn first.

Guided Tours

Painted on a wooden board outside the main entrance to the museum are a number of rules for visitors, and one of these informs that a guided tour takes place daily at 10:30 A.M.; however, anyone waiting for this tour would be highly disappointed, since no such guided tour occurs; instead tours take place on request. On busy days the APROs can be seen guiding classes of students or foreign delegations several times a day, highlighting the best collections and masterpieces, as Mr. Rizwan told me: 'we cannot talk about all the objects so I try and *transfer* the maximum amount

of knowledge I have.’⁷⁸ Just as guides select which objects to verbally embellish, they equally discern who gets guided. I was astonished never to see a group of ordinary visitors being given a guided tour, and when I sought a reason, Mrs. Kanvil iterated the widely held view that

The general public can see for themselves, they do not come to study, they just come for enjoyment, but if a person comes for study . . . they will be assisted. . . . There is no guide for the general public, and they do not feel the need either . . . they just look around and move on . . . because they are not on a study-tour.⁷⁹

The perception of enjoyment referred to here is tinged with a sense of being vulgar (Bourdieu 1996), even though many times this perception is negated by visitor inquisitiveness—visitors often listen, trying to snatch information being relayed as a guided tour passes by or ask gallery attendants questions.⁸⁰ Despite this interest, the museum continues to estimate the general public as lacking the appropriate skills and knowledge to learn from the exhibits in a proper manner; the public is contrasted with students and foreign tourists/delegations, who are perceived to possess the correct cultural capital (*ibid.*) to study/appreciate the cultural, historical, and artistic values of objects. This hierarchy was made compellingly apparent to me one afternoon while I was in the General Gallery, where I saw a gallery attendant hurriedly ask some local visitors to move away from a display case, because they were taking too much time and would obstruct a guided tour being conducted for a European couple. Duly, the three men sat down on the bench and waited patiently, watching and letting the ‘real’ learners pass before resuming their own tour. Foreign tourists, whose numbers have been in decline post-9/11 and after subsequent acts of terrorism within Pakistan,⁸¹ in the mind of the Lahore Museum are representative of possessing ‘museum literacy’ (Hooper-Greenhill 1994) and so are prioritised at the top end of ideal learners, followed closely by the educated.⁸² As Mrs. Kanvil told me:

The educated public are very good. The uneducated, when they come, they complain about many things, like this is not right or that is not right. They do not know the importance of the objects . . . when they look at the painted doors from Shalimar [Gardens] they say ‘Where did they get these old falling-apart doors from, and they are charging us to look at them!’ But an educated person can read where it is from and when it was made . . . the [uneducated] . . . just cause *disturbances*.⁸³

Clearly, this crude dichotomy between the educated and the uneducated, or perhaps those studying and those disturbing, defines who is engaged and hence guided. So, are other activities more educationally egalitarian?

Texts

Concerted efforts to provide information and knowledge about the museum and its exhibits, which supplement the glass box have recently been invigorated at the Lahore Museum in early 2003 with the introduction of coloured pamphlets, available in English or Urdu, briefly outlining each gallery's⁸⁴ collection. These pamphlets fill a gap in textual exegesis on the museum, since no guidebook⁸⁵ is available, and the leaflets double as portable mementos for the public to purchase during their visit. However, any positive benefits from this endeavour for the public are hampered by the simple oversight of pricing—each pamphlet costs Rs.10, the same price as an entrance ticket for an adult;⁸⁶ so rarely do visitors—educated or uneducated—purchase these pamphlets or even demonstrate an interest in doing so. The Lahore Museum's educational intentions and initiatives are again slightly misdirected, since they are based not on visitor-interest but on rash applications of perceived ideals for advancing informal learning in the museum—and so these efforts remain uninformative, since they manifest little regard and knowledge of visitors' profiles, interests, attraction, and mode of interaction (Chapter 4). However, one area where some relative progress has been made is that of lectures and quizzes organised by the museum.

Lectures

Upcoming lectures at the museum are advertised in Urdu on colourful yellow banners hung on the fencing that lines the Mall Road; they clearly state that these are public events, open to all. The relative novelty of these events and the unawareness of them among the public⁸⁷ have meant that even such open invitations have so far failed to entice, although they have become popular with colleges/universities in Lahore. Offering lectures is a significant step, since it creates one avenue whereby students (future visitors) can be introduced to the museum as an educational institution. In this respect, the work of the APROs to promote the museum's educational activities among colleges/universities and to coordinate lectures/quizzes has paid off, with many institutions in regular attendance.

During the winter and spring months, the lecture series, in similar vein as the colonial period, has become a regular feature in the museum's educational timetable. Held in the auditorium hall below the library, all the lectures have so far been delivered by the Director of the Lahore Museum on topics of his own choice—sometimes based on a theme spanning several weeks, such as Islamic Civilisation, or on a single topical subject, such as Ramadan.⁸⁸ The regimental atmosphere of these occasions creates a sense of authority for the museum: on lecture days around 3:30 P.M., Gallery In-Charges, reminded by a circular of their

compulsory attendance, make their way, sometimes begrudgingly, to join other attendees—mainly a regular core group of academics, students, invited guests, and some journalists. The guests are treated to a slide show of the Lahore Museum's masterpieces, backed by music, while awaiting the Director's arrival, with special guests on stage. A brief welcome address and recitation of a short prayer precedes the lecture, after which the only interruption is the video recording and still photography capturing the presence of speaker and guests; the lecture frequently concludes with the distribution of prizes for employee of the month and honorary guests, followed by much needed refreshments of tea, soft drinks, and snacks. Although popular and beneficial for museum exposure, these lectures fail to cultivate a wholesome correlation that furnishes a deeper understanding of the museum's collections—in other words, by not specifically concentrating on a collection or an artefact in the museum's possession, or making only oblique references to them, the link between the lecture and the museum is tenuous. In some ways, this situation presents itself as another lost opportunity to instigate activities that can disseminate the museum's materiality as knowledge through the unique cultural interface of the museum.

Museum Quiz

The procedure for quizzes is much the same as for lectures except that the auditorium is filled to capacity with students, for whom they are specifically organised, eager to back their college/university team,⁸⁹ providing for a lively affair driven by the spirit of recollection and competition. Quiz themes vary and overall concentrate on familiar historical or national personalities, such as Allama Iqbal; one of the more useful themes, from the museum's perspective, was the aptly entitled *History and Collections of the Lahore Museum*. For once, the museum latched onto what could be achieved through museum education, since participation required students to actually visit the museum and its library before the quiz to study the collections' and institution's history. Connecting the event with the museum proper, in more than name, makes a vital difference to the way students approach and subsequently use the museum.⁹⁰ One contributing reason for these beneficial results from the quizzes in comparison to the lectures or even the guided tours is that an informal 'contact zone' (Clifford 1997) is achieved in which learning becomes participatory and motivates the visitor to learn through active interaction rather than simple submission to the museum's pedagogy. If education at the Lahore Museum follows this example for all segments of its visiting public, the museum can become the learning institute it desires to be.

ARCHIVAL ALLURE

The need to educate, or at least to be seen as transferring knowledge contained in the collections of the Lahore Museum, is most evident in the efforts made for those who are considered to be educated or possessing the correct museum protocol/literacy. However, what is striking here is that, conversely, this situation also includes a need to retain control through limited action and dogmatic interpretation of the objects on the museum's own terms. This selective praxis is most explicit in the spectacular alienation of ordinary visitors by the museum's authoritative voices, which judge visitors' improper behaviour as discrediting the authorities' ultimate control through disregard for the museum's ideations and image as an educational institution (Chapter 4). However, the fundamental issue here is why this form of museum culture and thinking exists and is promoted by the museum staff. Despite the increasing influence of museological practices and training at the Lahore Museum since the 1970s, a warp remains between the museum's aspirations and achievable reality that is governed by its society's sociopolitics and the actual communities that appropriate it. For the museum, this predicament is tantamount to habitual praxis and discourse that are constrained by a Western museum model to which Gallery In-Charges are exposed in their limited training, foreign visits, and general museological awareness (local/global). Regardless of In-Charges' daily exposure to the Lahore Museum's limitations, the Western museum model and its museum-minded visitors remain idyllic for them and in the end prevent total acceptance and understanding of the museum's existing culture as a comparative localised reality.

However, it cannot be said that the museum staff are ignorant of *their* reality and the situation in which the Lahore Museum operates; they are fully conscious of it, but this awareness tends to emerge as a sense of implicit frustration and feelings of isolation, of being cut off from the global museum culture and always lagging behind. The non-existence of established and functional Pakistani museum networks, the inappropriateness of global cultural discourses, and meagre funds compound this situation but also mean that uncertainty about displays, professional ambiguity, and visitor interpretation suffuse habitual praxis and discourse as a psycho-museological complex. In such a predicament, order in, control of, and authority for the museum and its staff are projected onto its main asset—the material archive. The officers embrace their respective collections wholly, taking on the role of guardians who protect, maintain, classify, and expand the archive, which in return offers acknowledged prestige. The collections, when taken to symbolise knowledge, culture, and history in a pedagogic way, then appear as

conforming to a modern museum model and proffer a sense of authority and legitimacy linked to ownership. This archival fixation becomes a way to overcome comparative inadequacies and mediate the complex reality of the Lahore Museum, and essentially it is only through this ownership and control of the material archive's signification, as well as the limited educational activities, that worthiness can be imagined, and to some extent, attainable for the Lahore Museum's Gallery In-Charges.

Dominance of the Eurocentric museum model's practices, policies, and pedagogic learning pose major issues for non-Western museum cultures, such as in South Asia, where this model is unable to account for local historical and sociopolitical trajectories that govern museums' everyday realities and so seemingly relegates them as dysfunctional. New Museology as a critical reinterpretation and museological strategy against the established modern museum model proves to be equally redundant in the postcolonial context, since it does not consider or create room for different 'topographies of power' (Mathur 2005:703), histories, and modernities within which the museum has developed and flourishes in the non-West. Museums and museology are in urgent need of recognising these contemporary and historical facets that are part of what Saloni Mathur terms a 'global and comparative framework' (2005:704) that values the postcolonial perspective and the inherent sociopolitical and cultural processes that surround(ed) museums. Equally, South Asian museums need to reassess their habitual discourse and their specific context, abilities, and issues of indigenous interpretation ([Chapter 4](#)). Rather than simply acquiescing to the Western museum model, South Asian museums must reposition themselves not as secondary mimics or incomplete versions of the Euro-centric museum model; rather, they should confront this model head on and promote their own historical/social development, which is comparative to Western museums' development through colonialism ([Chapter 1](#)), and formulate a postcolonial museology that is first and foremost responsive to local needs, failures, and successes.

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Chapter 4

VISITING THE MUSEUM

Curiosity about the Ajaib Ghar



As he drummed his heels against *Zam-Zammah* he turned now and again from his king-of-the-castle game with little Chota Lal and Abdullah the sweetmeat-seller's son, to make a rude remark to the native policemen on guard over the row of shoes at the museum door. The big Punjabi grinned tolerantly: he knew Kim of old. So did the water-carrier, sluicing water on the dry road from his goatskin bag. So did Jawahir Singh, the museum carpenter, bent over new packing-cases. So did everybody in sight except the peasants from the country, hurrying up to the Wonder House to view the things that men made in their own province and elsewhere. The museum was given up to Indian arts and manufactures, and anybody who sought wisdom could ask the Curator to explain.

—Rudyard Kipling (1912:11–12)

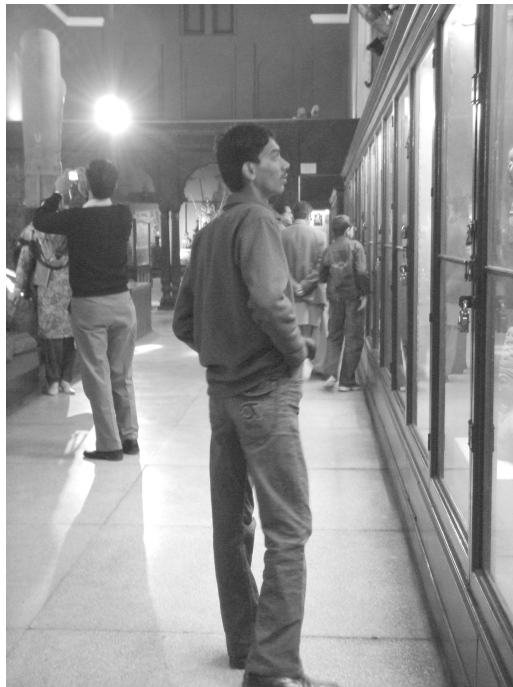
My country cousins, Roshan and Chaman, have come on a pilgrimage to the City of Lahore. I am asked to take them to *Ajaib Ghar* (museum) and *Chidhia Ghar* (zoo), the chief attractions on the itinerary of every visitor. . . . We hire a tonga on an hourly basis . . . proceed towards Gol Bagh, making our first stop at the famous museum, which is one of Lahore's proud possessions . . . it has a vast collection of antiquities, art objects, paintings, etc. As we pass through its galleries, my country cousins are wonderstruck by the size and range of the exhibits.

—Pran Nevile (1997:46–47)

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WANDERING VISITORS

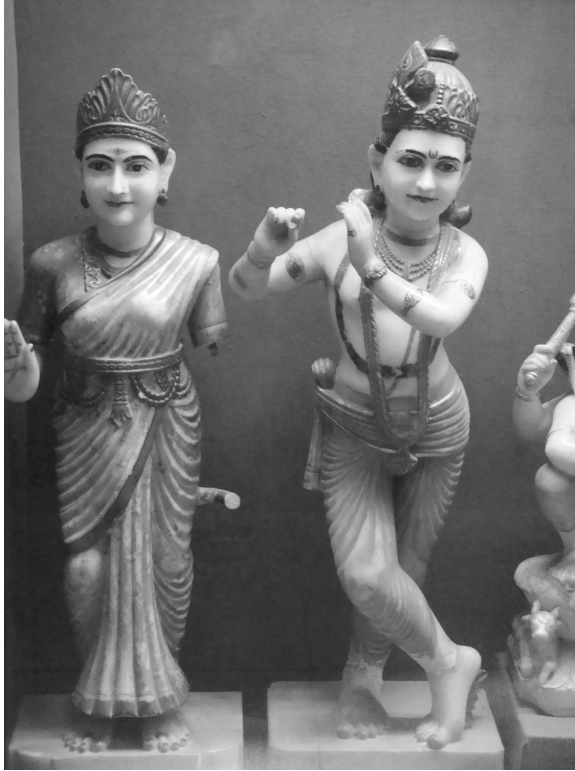
These quotes highlight how *Ajaib Ghar*'s magnetism, which attracted country peasants in Kipling's *Kim* (1912) and caused Neville's cousins to be 'wonderstruck,' gets its strength from the expectation of visiting the Lahore Museum. This dynamism continues to be evident today, when, starting in the early morning, various groups of friends, family, couples, and truants make their way to the museum to revisit, to inquire anew, or to while away a few hours in the much-famed *Ajaib Ghar* of Lahore.¹ The dormant galleries become alive with visitors' echoes and movement: scuffling feet, jangling *payal* ('anklets'), whispers, laughter, and discussion. Some people scuttle from one display to another in the hope to catch a glimpse of everything on their museum march, whereas others are absorbed by a single object and try to decipher some meaning. Rarely is the Lahore Museum the temple of silent contemplation suggested by the rules of proper museum visiting habits in the West, where any divergences are referred to as naive misconceptions. Instead, visitors² at the Lahore Museum in a very striking manner directly implicate themselves as an essential part of the museum that is hard to ignore (*illus.* 30). The museum then is inhabited not



30 Visitors in the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery

just by collections (Chapters 1 and 2) and curatorial-owner/guardianship (Chapter 3) but also by transient viewers who enter the museum with their own ideas, motivations, and desires. Parallel to object narratives and institutional ideology, run visitor experience and discourse, which cannot be assumed to replicate either since visitors have their own agendas. This interpretative autonomy of the visitor becomes more significant in a South Asian context, where the idea of a museum, since its colonial introduction, has been involved in a double translation: one for the (post)colonial authorities *and* another for the local public—past and present. Here I attend to local appropriation/resistance of this global technology (the museum), teasing out what may appear on the surface to be misunderstandings, when in actuality they are viable alternatives in conceptualising South Asian museum meanings. Do visitors seek out the ‘wisdom’ Rudyard Kipling (1912:12) suggests, the proud possessions of Lahore that Pran Neville indicates, or perhaps cultural and national identity? Then again, maybe visitors are interested in different readings altogether that accommodate an eclectic mix of these—refuting some, reifying others.

In the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery, a father leads his family around the gallery, wife and children in tow, to whom he relates what is exhibited with such authority that his quick sideways glances to read some labels go unnoticed. The father does not pass these sly knowledge acquisition skills onto his children; instead, he is content to bask in his illusory superiority. On the other side of the gallery, a couple of middle-aged men walk around engrossed in animated dialogue about what they are viewing, preferring to stand back, point, and inquisitively question each other, asking *Yeh kya hai?* (‘What is this?’). The Buddhist shrine from Burma (illus. 6, Chapter 1), which takes up one of the far walls in the gallery, is partially obscured by visitors posing in front of it to have their photograph taken, exposing its aesthetic appreciation as a beautiful backdrop.³ A trio of schoolboys stands giggling at the nudity on display in some of the sculptures, and other children, unable to resist the open space, run about. One little girl clad in a green and metallic gold-patterned frock summons her *nayi* bhanjee (‘new sister’) over, whose intricately hennaed hands and shimmering gold rings signalled her recently acquired status as a new bride and contrasted with the relics on display; the family accompanying the new couple were not too far behind. A group of young boys make their own way round the gallery with the eldest, about nine or ten years old, boldly telling the others: *Yeh sab India hai* (‘This is all India!’). Stopping at the statue of the Hindu goddess Radha (illus. 31), he confidently asserts: *India may aisi sari pehantay hai!* (‘In India they wear saris like this!’). One of their mothers joins them to point out a small ivory sculpture of a tree with a snake wrapped around its branches (illus. 32) and asks them: *Sanp ko*



31 Radha and Krishna *murti* in the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery (twentieth century)

dekha, kahan hai? ('Have you seen the snake, where is it?'); the boys just move onto the Tibetan section, repeating *Bas, sab India hai!* ('This is all India!').

Visitors to the Lahore Museum engage with the visual delights on offer in a myriad of active ways in an effort to consume as much as is possible before fatigue or boredom sets in. As one friend told another in his group: *Ahe jagga hai dekho wastay behtan-wathan wastay nahi!* ('This place is for looking not for sitting around!'). A minority of visitors use the museum in a way that is less concerned with visual consumption and more with the seclusion it offers from the public gaze to those the museum classifies as couples.⁴ However, the conventionally non-intrusive environment of the museum is offset by an official time limit of fifteen minutes before such couples are moved on by gallery attendants, to prevent what is seen as disruptive and improper behaviour in a public museum. Thus it would seem that not all visitors are equally welcomed



32 Ivory sculpture in the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery (twentieth century)

by the museum, and not all are satisfied either, as one member of a group of men leaving the museum announced: *Das rupay wi laylithay nay thay bas pittal day paanday dekhaiy!!* ('They have taken ten rupees and just shown brass utensils!!') (illus. 33). However, the disappointed visitor is eclipsed by the fascination and expectant wonderment that surrounds the Lahore Museum in the perception of the majority of visitors.

Just beyond the museum's outer fencing, a *dahi-balay* vendor frequently sold snacks to the families picnicking on the verdant lawns of the museum, and during my visits, I also spotted a man sitting on an old cotton sheet wearing a brightly coloured hat and claiming to be a *fakir*. He sat with a defunct record player, whose turntable had a paper 'record' marked with a multitude of concentric circles and letters. Using this 'computer,' the *fakir* professed to predict the future of willing participants. With an invocation of *Bismillah*, he had the customer spin the record and stop it at will three times to yield a series of letters that he translated into interpretations of the past and present, as well as



33 Brass and copper utensils on display in the General Gallery

predictions of the future. In a neat way, this activity on the margins of the museum personified and strengthened the institution's popular guise—as the Wonder House⁵—and, just as in the past when the modern museum's rational being was pervaded by curiosity and anguish over possible misreading(s) by ordinary visitors, also enhanced ambivalence and uncertainty around the museum's meaning and what was inside.

The cursory description of visitor activity in the museum given so far suggests that visitors are not mute observers but employ their own agency and creativity in interpreting this cultural institution at a level relevant to their needs. Visitors, therefore, just as much as the material collections and curatorial presentations, need to be accounted for in any investigation of the museum, especially in South Asia, where their role is highly visible, palpable, and not confined to informal learning. At times, the Lahore Museum is so overcrowded with people vying for the best view of an object that it becomes impossible to understand what is happening, and some visitors secretly try to touch an object, causing gallery attendants to comment: *Jitni dair yeh haath na lagalain inko assay lagta hai jessay dekha hi nahi*. ('Unless they touch, they feel as if they have not seen it'). The smooth surfaces of artefacts not secured behind glass attest to the fact that that objects are not just desired visually but enjoyed equally through tactility—for example, the Sikri Stupa, whose relief work shines from repeated touching and rubbing (illus. 34).⁶



34 Panel 6 of the relief work on the Sikri Stupa showing the offering of bowls to Buddha (second century C.E., Distt. Mardan; displayed in the Gandhara Gallery)

What I hope to show here is that, in this seeming state of chaos, misrecognition, and disinterestedness, the Lahore Museum's visitors are interpreting and creating meanings that address a set of requirements different from the museum's authorised knowledge and visual pedagogy. By exploring who the visitors are and what meanings they ascribe to, or resist in, the objects they see, I do not bracket this investigation of South Asian visitors as part of the recent museological turn that reactivates the visitor or 'audience' (Hooper-Greenhill 1995) ([Chapter 5](#)); instead, I emphasise that visitor interpretations are both subjective and contingent on local culture, with the missing visitors in my museum analysis being the indigenous spectators. My redress then is not a postmodern recognition but emerges from the historically situated visitors, who so far have been spoken for or written about in South Asia (Prakash 1999); references to slippages in visitor interpretation within the colonial discourse show that perhaps formulations of alternative meanings were enunciated alongside the colonial dogma (Bhabha 1994). It is with this incipient contact between the South Asian public and the Lahore Museum during the colonial period that I proceed.

REFUSAL OF THE COLONIAL GAZE

It is easier to pay attention to dominant rhetoric, narratives, and visions of institutional representation in a museum than to visitors' experience and reception in colonial India mainly because evidence relating to visitor interpretation/behaviour is scant and minimal at best. However, this limited archival availability should not conceal the fact that museums were popular institutions and actively engaged with by indigenous visitors,⁷ with equal access being permitted to Indians in colonial society. Inferences and clues from remarks on local visitor behaviour written in annual reports, although usually brief, do give some insight into modes of translation, or indigenisation, of the museum by the mass public in colonial India. Observations by colonial administrators/curators that refer to or speak of visitors implicitly recognise the presence of the Other, despite museum authorities' preoccupation with mapping India—collecting, displaying, and disseminating economic, sociopolitical, historical, and cultural knowledge (Chapter 1). Museums in colonial India, as will be evident, were not distanced from the Indian public at large but were actively appropriated, and not just by those with 'second sight' (Prakash 1999:34).

In the annual report for 1891–1892, J. L. Kipling states that the Lahore Museum had maintained its popularity among the Indian public, who continued to visit,⁸ with subsequent attendance figures attesting to a growing awareness of the museum ranging from 133,905 (lowest) in 1893–1894 to 600,072 (highest) in 1921–1922.⁹ Interestingly enough, it is only in the 1916–1917 annual report¹⁰ that European residents of Lahore are stated to have been interested enough to start visiting the museum frequently. Perhaps one reason for this was the so-called unscientific perception of the museum among Europeans due to the large numbers of Indian visitors. Similarly, at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Bombay (now Mumbai), noticing the strong attraction among the Indians, the curator Cecil Burns (1903–1918) wrote:

the Museum [attracts] all classes of the community. Nowhere can so many different types be seen together as in the Galleries. . . . On the other hand the European community do not visit the Museum in large numbers. The reason for this firstly is that the gardens are more attractive . . . second no single collection of specimens has been kept with the scientific accuracy and thoroughness to attract professional and amateur scientists . . . labels were either missing . . . wrong, or lack sufficient detailed information to arouse any interest.¹¹

This difference in attitudes toward the museum prompts one to deduce that the majority of visitors up until then must have been Indian, which

is corroborated by the highest attendance number every year coinciding with local festival days. At the Lahore Museum, these were either at the end of Muharram or around *Chiragon ka Mela* (Fair of Lamps), which took place at Shalimar Gardens. Other prominent times were during Hindu pilgrimages, when devotees passed through Lahore on their way to places such as Haridwar, as well as at events such as the Viceregal Darbar, held on November 30, 1894.¹² This surge in the volume of visitors on festival days led F. H. Andrews at the Lahore Museum to comment in 1895–1896 that the public's conduct was 'as usual . . . good. The rustic visitors are always noisy. Particularly on *mela* ["fair"] days, but their behaviour is otherwise invariably orderly.'¹³

A major contributing factor that might have enhanced favouritism toward the museum, other than curiosity, must have been its accessibility to all sections of society and non-adoption of the 'rule of colonial difference' (Chatterjee 1993:18) prevalent in other institutions. The museum, it would seem, was more committed to cultivating a democratic space, allowing for the mutual agency of both coloniser and colonised to be habituated.¹⁴ At the Lahore Museum, this principle was extended to gender equality: the female domain was accommodated on *Zenana* days, held on the first Monday of every month, which allowed females observing *purdah* or wishing to avoid unwarranted male attention to have a chance of seeing the museum. However, it would appear that the indigenous visitors were not content to view the exhibits as presented, choosing instead to differentiate their appropriation from within by simultaneously enjoying colonial reconstructions of their culture and deconstructing them using a local perspective and its internal meanings (Chatterjee 1995).

Thus the Lahore Museum was trying to cater to all its visitors and garner public curiosity in history, culture, arts, and science through its displays, thereby attempting to instigate reform and progress in all sectors of society. These late Victorian ideals were already instilled among the elite and educated Indians, who also saw immense educational value in the museum for the public (Chapter 1). However, this wish to educate the mass public was not straightforward, since it was offset by the fear that learning had to confront the Indian public's¹⁵ widespread adherence to superstitious and irrational beliefs, which was compounded by illiteracy. It was hoped that the museum's visual immediacy would act as a book for the illiterate, as Dr. Bhau Daji Lad, cofounder of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Bombay (Mumbai), remarked in 1858: 'to the learned especially—and in that we must include the very great majority of our countrymen—a Museum is a book with broad pages and large print, which is *seen* at least, and by mere inspection *teaches* somewhat, even if it be not *read*.'¹⁶ Any success here was dependent on

the alignment of colonial and Indian gazes, which, it was thought, would be achieved with visitors' repeated exposure to colonial displays, thereby debunking unscientific beliefs and opening the eyes of the Indian public to new visions of progress. As noted at the Nagpore [Nagpur] Exhibition of 1865: 'The Natives cannot understand a new thing, unless it be held before their eyes with something of continuous perseverance. The first time they may wonder; the second time they may understand; the third they may observe with a view to practice.'¹⁷

Overall, the Lahore Museum's reports state that visitor conduct was orderly and good, with only minor disturbances—regular breakages of cabinet glass, remarked to be accidental—and some attempts at object theft; these small acts of rustic behaviour are telling of how anxieties concerning visitors were not baseless. There were also regular incidents of shoe thefts, indicating that people must have been removing their shoes before entering the museum. These occurrences signify that the museum was not functioning as a popular 'textbook'; instead, the indigenous gaze was repositioning the institution within Indian social practices and cultural connotations. It is impossible to say exactly what the indigenous translations were, but it can be conjectured that they incorporated the desire to see curious, new, and religious objects—including *darshan* of gods/goddesses for Hindus and scriptures and paraphernalia of other religions. Combining the curious, the new, and the religious, J. L. Kipling wrote in relation to the Gandhara sculptures: 'Much is being written and said of Indian Buddhism, but the bulk of the people have never heard of the great saint; and his numerous statues in the Lahore Museum are as new and strange to the crowds of the native visitors as would be the contents of the Vatican Museum in Rome.'¹⁸

These new visual and corporeal experiences were not limited to the museum but interrelated with ephemeral exhibitions that were ascribed new names: following the Nagpore Exhibition, 'returning visitors [had] spread the news all over these Provinces. . . . In some places a new name, *Pradarshan* ["performance"] has been applied . . . and the word now is in regular use.'¹⁹ Although one significant perceptual differentiation that separates the two modes is that exhibitions at first were regarded with suspicion in relation to their intent: visitors to the Nagpore Exhibition (1866) initially 'thought it was a fresh device whereby the British Government intended to replenish its coffers.'²⁰ This mistrust of authority by visitors did not appear in relation to museums, where perhaps the permanence of representation and possibility of repeat visits allowed for familiarisation and discerning of favourite sections or objects. No specific mention is made of the most popular sections at the Lahore Museum, although it can be suggested that attractions included the ethnological section, religious idols, and odd curiosities, as was the case for

other museums. Henry Burkhill (Acting Superintendent of the Industrial Section) at the Indian Museum wrote:

My figures show that the Ethnologic Court is the most popular in the Industrial Section and experience tells us it is the most popular in the whole Museum. The life size castes and tribes of India . . . shoes and hats and musical instruments. . . . In the Art Court the Bhavnagar House-Front, the Hludaw throne. The Burmese glass-mosaic . . . ivories and pottery attract most.²¹

At the Lucknow Provincial Museum, again tribal artefacts of the province and images of gods and goddesses, such as a bronze Valli, were found most attractive and alluring.²² This predilection for curiosity is not just a case of visitors' choice: some museums specifically promoted the Wonder House image. For example, the Watson Museum in Rajkot,²³ advertised that its interesting exhibits included a manuscript written on camel skin, an Italian view carved on a single stone, a postcard containing 21,005 letters, a flexible sandstone,²⁴ a child with two heads, and a life-size portrait of the world's smallest man.²⁵

It would appear that Indian visitors to colonial museums were not interested so much in informal education as in feasting their eyes on the strange, magical, unique, and entertaining—in a fashion similar to what they may have encountered at fairs, pilgrimages, and other places of recreation, such as the zoological gardens ([Chapter 5](#)).²⁶ However, although visitors are generally portrayed by colonial authorities as disorientated wanderers, it is simultaneously acknowledged that the objects they engaged with most frequently were those that held some resonance for them, and so the indigenous museum experience was selective and needs to be assessed at a more nuanced level. Comments about visitors to the Victoria and Albert Museum, Bombay (Mumbai), are exemplary: 'Interest of visitors of this class lay in that with which they were familiar, especially ethnology and mythology' (Fern 1926:9). Markham and Hargreaves also give an account of indigenous resonance following observation of visitor groups: 'They were particularly interested in exhibits which fell within their comprehension. They crowded round the cases showing indigenous games, village industries, agricultural operations etc., excitedly named the exhibits, laughed over well-known figures and explained things to one another, their faces wreathed in smiles and themselves enjoying every minute.'²⁷

Despite this recognition, Markham and Hargreaves refrain from giving any validity to this participation, stating that visitors still approached the museum as a 'peep-show, a wonder house, a mansion full of strange things and queer animals and the main appeal is to the Indian sense of wonder and credulity' (1936:61). Colonial observers denied giving

legitimacy to other bodily interpretations that lay beyond a textual or singularised dominant narrative (Bennett 2003) and continued to situate the native spectator's misreading(s) as gullible and misinformed by their own naive dialectics of seeing. Visitor agency and visual interaction that exceeded reliance on literacy then presented a dilemma for colonial representation,²⁸ since they contested prescribed textual and visual narratives constructed in displays and opened them up to negation through other meanings and interpretations (Prakash 1999).

Pleasure for visitors had a definite curious edge to it, although perhaps not in the most obvious and conventional sense. The viewing of objects in the museum context would have educed a strangeness for the Indian public that must have intensified when consolidated with the fact that visitors were seeing a representation of one's own culture in a new medium—entombed in glass cases.²⁹ Colonial museums had to face up to these 'icons of ignorance' (Prakash 1999:40), who were asserting their subjectivity by reappropriating objects that were not of an Other but of the Self, being viewed by Indians; so, these encounters were opportune for deviation from colonial objectification of Indian culture. The appearance of what colonials perceived as improper interpretations and viewing practices through the indigenous gaze inserted an existence and object meanings that emerged from a living concreteness grounded in 'native particularity' (ibid.), which disturbed the projected colonial authority of deciphering India and exerted indigenous agency that museums wanted to reform. It is this intimacy and struggle that are exposed in the minor details presented by museum curators in their reports, whereby the indigenous appropriation refused to assimilate and maintained its freedom by not returning the colonial gaze, thereby undermining hegemonic knowledge from the margins (Prakash 1996). This indeterminate figure of the native visitor also exposed that the museum in colonial India had not been transplanted into an empty space but into a living culture and society, and the museum realism elicited was not simply of the colonial imagination: 'other realisms' (Pinney 1998) asserted alternative interpretations.

Visitors to the Lahore Museum increasingly confronted the museum space with a variety of realisms—sacred, secular, and magical—as 'the Museum show[ed] no signs of losing its hold on the public,'³⁰ and this mass appeal had its administrative uses also, especially for justify funding requirements. According to Lionel Heath:

Other cities in India give large sums towards the maintenance of the Museums and are proud to have a 'Wonder House' for the benefit of the people . . . and the crowds that besiege its turnstiles on public holidays show how greatly the people from far afield love the wonders and beauties they can only see in Kipling's *Ajaib Ghar*.³¹

Nearing the end of colonial rule, the view of local visitors was still heavily influenced by distaste and had been successfully ingrained into Indian curators. Visitors remained a crowd whose activities strayed far from realising the idealised modern museum experience of rational recreation and informal learning; the comments of Zafar Hasan, writing to the Lahore Museum Development Committee in 1943, show that owing to: ‘free admission and also the observance of holiday on Sunday by the Local shopkeepers, there was always a great rush of aimless visitors, causing great inconvenience to visitors themselves and a considerable difficulty to the Museum staff in maintaining discipline and preserving exhibits from damage.’³²

The Lahore Museum, like other public museums in colonial India, had difficulty in addressing visitor appropriations, and so aspersions were primarily based on lack of education and should also have included differing ways of seeing (see [Chapter 5](#)). The museum in this capacity occupied an ‘interstitial’ (Prakash 1999:40) space, and this divergence resulted partly from scant interest by colonial or Indian curators, who, when engaging with visitors, chased after signs of ideal visitor behaviour. By leaving interpretation wholly to the visual efficacy of museum displays, curators were indirectly encouraging visitors to employ knowledge from other indigenous arenas to comprehend what was being shown, and so many objects remained curiosities ([Chapter 5](#)).

For now, I return to the present and examine the contemporary situation at the Lahore Museum, examining its relationship with, and opinion of, visitors. Does this interaction encompass issues of identity and cultural heritage, or is it still about wanderings and an indigenised museum experience as portrayed by Markham and Hargreaves that is reminiscent of the father mentioned earlier, showing his family around the Lahore Museum?

We make it our business, therefore, to accompany some of these parties round museums; such parties were usually the average family group of five or six, the father walking ahead followed by the women and children. Occasionally he would stop and say ‘there is a baboon,’ or ‘A sword,’ and the family would all cluster round, the children sometimes asking questions, but generally using their eyes much more than their tongues.’³³

THE ZOO OF OBJECTS

Whenever I brought up the question of visitors with Gallery In-Charges at the Lahore Museum, their initial reaction, more often than not, confirmed a consensus that most visitors perceived no distinction between the *chidhia ghar* (‘zoo’) and the museum. Miss Naushaba Anjum put it

plainly: ‘the general public do not know the difference between a zoo and a museum, they just come for a quick look and for recreation.’³⁴ This response was supposed to be answer enough, and it is true that many museum visitors may also visit the zoo; indeed, both are on the Mall Road. However, by equating the museum with the zoo for the visitor, In-Charges contrast the ‘proper’ value of their research work to the visitors’ ‘inappropriate’ recreational desires. These perceptions of visitors are formulated primarily on observations by In-Charges during routine visits or time spent maintaining/changing gallery exhibits that expose them to visitors. No regular surveys are carried out at the museum, although Mr. Asim Rizwan stated that he sometimes questioned visitors about their museum visit: ‘This is just my own personal interest . . . [there is] no culture of regular surveys; we do get feedback in the comments you overhear going around galleries.’³⁵ He also said that a general Comments Book was once made available for visitor responses as well as during a temporary exhibition,³⁶ although regrettably such provisions were a one-time thing. This minimal contact and communication between the museum and its visitors does not induce In-Charges to rethink their stereotype of visitors. So what exactly is imagined?

Museum staffs, when thinking about the visiting public, unequivocally categorise visitors and their habits into distinct types assessed purely in terms of perceived level of education, which is taken to reflect directly a willingness to acquire knowledge. On this scale, students and foreign visitors are credited as being the most interested and capable, in comparison to the uneducated ordinary visitors (*aam log*), who, Miss Humera Alam told me, represent ‘another public . . . that just come and see, then go. Maybe just worried and leave . . . they think these are old things, look at the statues and are amazed. They try to understand them, but get their amusement here.’³⁷ In addition to this tripartite division, another category of visitor is marked by its absence—nonvisitors. Overwhelmingly, these are the upper classes of Lahore society, who rarely visit, but if they do, it is usually to accompany guests. As one resident of Defence³⁸ asked me: ‘Why do you go there? There is nothing in that place. We tell our servants to go there; it’s good entertainment for them. That place has nothing for us. Maybe if it was like museums abroad, then I might visit.’ The museum is aware of this upper-class boycott and takes it as a phenomenon reflecting this class’s hectic lifestyle and distanced location—the museum being on the wrong side of the city.³⁹ However, one reason for this denigration of the museum that is overlooked is its association as a place for lower-class recreation. In relation to consumption of culture, the elite are of the opinion that the Lahore Museum does not do enough to foster a vibrant image of national identity or to preserve heritage at a level that makes it appealing to them. Yet

ironically, for many in this class, their cultural aspirations lie elsewhere, beyond Pakistan, as the Defence resident stated: Had the museum been more like a foreign museum, meaning Euro-American, she would have visited.⁴⁰ This paradoxical predicament presents a situation in which the educated visitors whom the museum yearns for distance themselves from it, as Mr. Shoaib Ahmed poignantly noted:

This modern class we have, the wealthy and progressive modern people, they do not come. The reason being that if you cut yourself from your roots, if the clothes you wear are not of your country, the language you speak is not your language, the kind of architecture you live in is not your architecture, then what interest will you have in the museum . . . they do not own this culture, so why would they visit?⁴¹

Apart from the elite, the only other group identified as nonvisitors were religious schools and orthodox public, who were said to refer to the museum as anti-Islamic—a place of idols. Dr. Niazi highlighted this allegation and stated that he tries to emphasise that a comparative history of religions is displayed, and this approach alleviates most of their museum anxieties.⁴² Just as the uneducated visitor is thought to be unaware of the real value of the museum as a place of learning and research, similarly this visitor type is thought to be too rigid⁴³ in their criticism of figural or inappropriate representation on display.⁴⁴ My interest here lies precisely in investigating the so-called uneducated, who form the majority of visitors but so far have been misunderstood, and whom Mr. Mujeeb Khan described as ‘just com[ing] for *entertainment* alone and are not concerned with *education* or to learn. . . . The Lahore Museum is just playing the role of entertainment, and this is a *real factual* thing.’⁴⁵

This judgment by the museum retains hints of the rustic visitors of colonial times, who were thought to be attracted by the curious alone, as Mr. Ishfaq Ahmed Cheema alluded in his remark that ‘the uneducated come to see *ajeeb aur ghareeb* [“strange”] things and to see what is kept here, as things like statues and the like cannot be found in the market and so not seen, so they come to see new things.’⁴⁶ I am not suggesting in a reductive manner that the visitor has remained unchanged since the colonial era—rather, perhaps that the desire for the curious or strange is *one* enduring appeal of the museum for South Asian visitors, which is certainly borne out by the popularity in the Swat Gallery of a mannequin. Mrs. Zarina Khurshid recollected how this one exhibit attracted many visitors: ‘They came from afar to see this figure as they thought I had made something magical, some called it the *jadu wali* [“magic woman”]; others called it the *kantohn wali* [“woman with earrings”] . . . I still don’t understand what these people saw in this but they were attracted.’⁴⁷

This labelling of visitors as uneducated and their experience of the Lahore Museum as improper is too generalised to be informative about what I suggest is a more complex engagement requiring further investigation. It is worth noting that this negative image does not deter the public, and contra the daunting or difficult experience identified by Nick Merriman (1989a) for those with inadequate ‘cultural competence’ (Bourdieu 1996:2), the uneducated at the Lahore Museum have few hesitations and instead are determined to see what they want, as Dr. Dar’s anecdote illuminates:

I was passing by the Swat Gallery one day when it was closed for some changes to the display work and saw some rural women and children sitting in front of the door. So I went up to them and asked ‘What is the matter?’ and one of the women said: ‘This gallery is closed and we want to see it.’ I told them to go look at other galleries, as this was not open yet. . . . After I returned three and a half hours later, the same people were still there waiting.⁴⁸

The Lahore Museum is definitely offering an experience to the rustic/uneducated, as much as to the student/scholar/researcher, primarily through the arousal of visual inquisitiveness that is evident in the queries put to the gallery attendants about the originality of objects, their function, and history.⁴⁹ It is my intention here to understand this indigenous experience,⁵⁰ which more than the objects has been misconceived and orientalised by the museum, without reverting to a typified characterisation as illiterate or disinterested—rather illuminating a juxtaposition of the *ajab*, attractive and informative.

THE SUBJECTIVE MUSEUM

I have so far been referring to the Lahore Museum’s attending public as visitors of the institution, which implies an imbalance of power, because the institution’s authority and ideological hegemony are seemingly superior to the subjective agency of the public. Recent studies in museology try to reframe visitors as an active component of museum interpretation by reconceptualising them as an audience (Hooper-Greenhill 1995, 2000). The practice of simply counting museum visitors (Hooper-Greenhill 1988) or converting them into statistical data is now, theoretically at least, deemed insufficient and uncritical following the museological turn of the late 1980s (Lumley 1988; Vergo 1989). Increasingly, emphasis is placed on the contingent relationship that exists between the museum and its communities of consumers—investigating thoughts, feelings, and experiences of visitors, whether conforming or resistive—as part of different modes of museum interaction: symbolic, verbal, and corporeal.

There is an urgent need to understand better museum interpretation and consumption, as Hooper-Greenhill notes: 'The biggest challenge facing museums at the present time is the reconceptualisation of the museum/audience relationship. After almost a century of rather remote relationships between museums and the public, museums today are seeking ways to embrace their visitors more closely.'⁵¹

The assumption by museums that the message they construct in displays is consumed unquestionably by unimaginative and passive visitors is now thought to be misleading and is being redressed through resocialisation of the museum and reconceptualisation of its visitors as active meaning-makers. Admittedly, it is difficult to place the Lahore Museum's current view of its visitors in this progressive discourse; however, where this shift is useful for South Asian museology is in opening up the realm of interpretation beyond the museum's own message. This attention on visitors liberates comprehension of the museum from the fetters of institutional dogma, and, with the majority of the South Asian public still unclear about the role of a museum in society, it allows one to approach previously inappropriate understandings from a new contextualisation within local social and cultural moorings. A greater probability then opens up for legitimising alternative visitor interpretation based on other consumption experiences and not just museums, especially social practices of viewing ([Chapter 5](#)) and persisting structures, values, and practices of culture, history, and identity.

This reinvestment in the visitor as an active agent capable of negotiating the meaning of museum objects is in reaction to previous visitor studies, the majority of which emanated from the United States during the twentieth century and limited their interests to examining the educational impact and proficiency of exhibits on visitors' psychological behaviour (Hein 1998; Lawrence 1991). Guided by a survey mentality, this museum research became popular in 1950s Britain as a heuristic tool to gather statistical demographics and cultural indices and by the 1970s was firmly ingrained, with two-thirds of evaluation being of this nature (Lawrence 1991). The addition of sociological dimensions instigated changes, but, methodologically, research remained tied to the survey technique:⁵² for example, Nick Merriman (1989a, 1989b) used a postal survey to correlate visitor/nonvisitor motivations and perceptions toward heritage and museum consumption with socioeconomic disposition.⁵³ However, recently Merriman is also propounding a more subjective approach to, and investigation of, museum experiences, and one vital factor that has caused this advance is the incorporation of an ethnographic method.

Interest and support for using ethnography signals a dissatisfaction with totalising images/narratives about visitors and moves toward

partial and contingent meanings paralleling those advocated by media research, as Ang notes for television audiences: 'It is not the search for (objective, scientific) Truth in which the researcher is engaged, but the construction of *interpretations*, of certain ways of understanding the world, always historically located, subjective and relative' (1996:46, emphasis original). Ethnography's ability to lend a deeper understanding of museum consumption that is interested not only in the completed museum message (Handler and Gable 1997) or the critic's own agendas makes museologists and museum anthropologists⁵⁴ enthusiastic about adopting this methodology (Butler 2007; Handler and Gable 1997; 2007; Merriman 1996, 1999; Perin 1992). The museum then demands analysis not as a neutral global technology but as a social arena that is contested and debated by both producers and users.⁵⁵ As Handler and Gable (1997:8–9) state:

[Very little research] focuses on the museum as a social arena in which many people of differing backgrounds continuously and routinely interact to produce, exchange, and consume messages . . . there has been almost no ethnographic inquiry into museums as arenas of ongoing, organized activities. As a result, most research on museums has proceeded by ignoring much of what happens in them.

It is with this shift in perspective toward exploring the subjective visitor experience in mind that I utilise ethnographic moments to provide insights into the Lahore Museum's 'communities of response' (Davis 1997:9).

VERNACULARISING⁵⁶ THE LAHORE MUSEUM

The Lahore Museum's aspiration for an imagined ideal visitor socialised in middle/upper class *habitus* possessing the cultural capital/competence described in Bourdieu's (1996)⁵⁷ sociological analysis affirms the dominance of consumption practices and sensibilities based on a Eurocentric museum-visiting regime⁵⁸ while denigrating the interaction of its own public as antithetical. Despite the recent emphasis on reflexive analysis of museum consumption by different communities,⁵⁹ social class still subliminally underlies issues of aesthetic appreciation and appropriate understanding within museums and to some extent is naturalised and uncritically accepted or desired, as in the Lahore Museum's case. However, what if the norm is different? Should this necessarily be taken as a sign of failure of a museum to perform, or can such instances be understood as indigenisation attempts in other contexts/cultures? By inquiring into the subjective experiences and agency of the Lahore Museum's contemporary public I want to debunk this class stigma and the almost mythic

singularisation of South Asian visitors as an undifferentiated mass of rustic/uneducated; and one place to start is with some initial clarity into visitors' habits and reception that can be attained through in-depth questionnaire/interview responses.⁶⁰

What Class of Visitors?

A striking feature of the Lahore Museum's visiting public is the pervasiveness of group visits,⁶¹ either as family—joint/nuclear—or with other relatives/friends; single visitors are rare and predominately male.⁶² The group sizes vary from two to fifteen plus—the larger numbers prevail among families from villages, towns, or distant districts in Punjab, such as Sargodha, especially during such festival periods as Data Sahib's *urs*. The average group comprised five persons, indicating that museum visiting is rarely conceived of as a solitary activity and that any interpretation between the viewer and the object is a collective engagement of spectatorship, discussion, and sharing of knowledge.⁶³ Even the process of planning a visit is subject to group consensus, with equal respondents claiming that the decision was shared with family/relations,⁶⁴ who acted as the primary source through which they heard about the Lahore Museum.⁶⁵ Word of mouth (*sunī-sunai*) and sharing of museum encounters between individuals and generations, more than any museum advertising, prevents the museum from being forgotten.

This popular discourse on the Lahore Museum among the public contributes greatly in generating intrigue and usually perpetuates a desire to visit. Sumera, a young girl who lived in a village near Islamia Town and worked as domestic help⁶⁶ in Lahore, had never visited the museum, yet from the vivid accounts she had heard she could visualise it in much the same way as anyone who had: 'I have just heard that people go there to look at very, very old things such as *talwaran* ["swords"], *topian* ["hats"], *tohpaan* ["cannons"] . . . things that Mughal's used and many *bhut* ["idols"] . . . I would like to visit if someone took me, but I haven't even seen the zoo!"⁶⁷ (illus. 35). This discursive action and dissemination of information on the museum within social groupings lodges and circulates ideas within public memory, allowing for the construction of a museum image before any visit.

Many visitors pointed out that their current visit was a 'first'; however, this type of statement should be loosely interpreted, since it usually refers to the fact that they have not visited for a while—maybe since childhood or for a couple of years. Return visits are often claimed to be firsts,⁶⁸ when in actuality they are periodic reintroductions of the museum, which over time and age conspire to offer a more engaged experience of the objects with increased corporeal awareness (*bosh mai*),



35 Swords, rifles, and canons from late Mughal and early British period in the Arms and Armoury Gallery

each visit adding and rejuvenating previous memories (illus. 36). As Zainab from Kamoki stated:

I knew there were old things like *bhut*, stones, and Chinaware. These things were here when I came as a child, and it is to see these sorts of things that we come, but back then it was just recreational; now with each return visit I am getting more and more interested.⁶⁹

The relationship between the Lahore Museum and its many visitors is then surprisingly stable and does not represent haphazard visits by entertainment seekers; beyond the actual visit, the connection remains active through social discourse and memory. This commitment is strengthened by the fact that over half⁷⁰ of those questioned stated that the Lahore Museum was the only museum they had visited, and those who had visited other Pakistani museums preferred the Lahore Museum in terms of size, atmosphere, and variety of collections. Clearly, the museum's ordinary visitors propagate a reputation that sustains and geographically extends its popularity beyond institutional boundaries among Lahore's urban visitors and the equal number of visitors from other cities, towns, and villages in the Punjab Province,⁷¹ whose class and education does not fit the misconceived homogenising labels of uneducated/rustic. The



36 Chinese porcelain on display in the General Gallery (Ming Dynasty 1368–1644)

visitor stereotype imagined by the Lahore Museum based on Eurocentric ideals remains elusive, because class alone is a misleading sociological marker and cannot be used to accurately assess behaviour or predilections of South Asian visitors, since other social and cultural factors affect the museum's appropriations. Deviations from a Western class-based norm should not be interpreted as representing a 'wrong' class of visitor; rather, they represent more a case of local appropriation whose exact nature so far has remained a quandary for South Asian museums since the colonial era.

The issue of museum visitor class has been investigated most clearly within notions of middle class *habitus* and cultural dispositions as presented for museums in Europe (see Bourdieu and Darbel 1991; Merriman 1989b)—but is this universally applicable? Although I do not wish to typify the Lahore Museum's visitors, a generalised profile can help illuminate the problem with confining interpretation to perceived

characterisations based on social/cultural/economic markers. The limitations of research here permit me to examine briefly a number of indicators—education, occupation, property, and ownership of material goods. In terms of education, the majority of visitors stated that they were educated in Government Urdu medium schools;⁷² a third had obtained secondary education—matriculation—with a similar number going onto higher education at various levels.⁷³ Visitor occupations included skilled workers, civil servants, landowners, teachers, shop-owners, farmers, tailors, mechanics, bankers, rickshaw drivers, textile mill workers, railway guards, government employees, armed forces, and the unemployed. Most of the women were housewives, teachers, or students. In terms of property and material possessions, most visitors indicated that they lived in owner-occupied (including joint family system) housing,⁷⁴ and most owned a radio, television, fans, or cooler;⁷⁵ over a third had cable television, and nearly half had a motorbike.⁷⁶ From these indicators, it then seems that the majority belonged to the lower-middle to middle classes and not the uneducated/rustic class; however, the cultural disposition of the middle classes in South Asia, as Rachel Dwyer (2000) points out for urban India, is not as uniform as that espoused by Bourdieu (1996).

The problem for South Asia is that this class contains a multitude of cultures, and both Dwyer (2000) and Pavan Varma (1998)⁷⁷ separate the middle classes into three sections comprising the old, lower, and new middle classes, which cover a large spectrum of social and cultural values, consumption practices, and economic capital. This definitional difference in South Asia is compounded by the fact that the middle class is less fixed to education and economic determinants. As Ashis Nandy (1998) rightly points out, this class is best understood in political and aspirational terms rather than purely economic ones. Adopting aspiration and desire as indicators of social mobility, although less quantifiable, is also helpful for Pakistani society. As Sabeeha Hafeez (1991) notes that an idealised middle class has not formed; instead, an artificial middle class has emerged.⁷⁸ So, attention to class alone creates partial inferences, and it is better to focus on actual consumption and interpretation. Ironically, then, the majority of visitors the Lahore Museum attracts are from a section of the middle classes that exist in South Asia: mainly the lower middle classes, whether from urban or rural areas.

If class is understood from a localised social perspective then this suggests that, although class identity exists for the Lahore Museum, it does not function in provisioning specific cultural capital/competence, taste, or status in South Asia as for the West and subsequently reveals very little about actual museum consumption and visual interpretation. It is only when one examines how the museum and its collections are actually interpreted, socialised, and perceived that restrictions of the class

association are broken down. In South Asia, although a class-specific *habitus*, a 'habitual way of seeing' (Rogoff 1995) and interpreting, is absent, a cultural space exists for social imagining beyond class, where cultural identity and its representations are negotiated (Pinney 2001a) and different class distinctions are simultaneously informed and unified by overarching cultural dispositions, behaviour, and practices reflective of wider cultural socialisation.

Pseudocurators

The subjective experience begins and incorporates a priori expectations, perceptions, and feelings visitors hold toward the Lahore Museum that often oscillate between combinations of a *tehreeki ghar* ('historical house') and a *bhut bangla* ('house of idols'). Rarely did someone like Masroor from Multan Road in Lahore make a strict association between museums, history, and culture: 'I hoped for many things, that there would be mementos [*nishaaniyan*] from different historical periods and also Pakistani culture [*sakafat*].'⁷⁹ Mostly, responses expressed the intention to see something old (*purani cheesain*), weapons, idols (*bhut*), objects from the Mughal period as well as new and special (*khas*) things, with an overall anticipation of visual pleasure and amazement at viewing a medley of artefacts. Saima Taufail, a fourth-year B.A. student from Krishanagar in Lahore, who often visited the Lahore Museum with family, related this expectation:

You feel strange before you go, you wonder what will be there, don't know what to expect. If you have heard about it then you know, but if not then you just wonder and have strange thoughts and feelings . . . what are these old things. . . . First time I went with my uncle and auntie we looked at all the first and second galleries, the pictures and read all the things, the Holy Quran samples are very well written, the stamps and coins upstairs were very attractive . . . now I remember everything and where it is because I have seen it so many times, it is memorised . . . so now it is mostly for entertainment.⁸⁰

To pinpoint a single reason behind spectatorship of the Lahore Museum—history, culture, recreation (*saehtar-o-taffri*), general interest (*shauk*), or curiosity—ignores the fact that all or any one can motivate a visit to see the museum. What significantly prevents simplification is that the will to learn is also present, not as a by-product of rational recreational but resulting from the interest people show in the museum, which may not always be fulfilled. As one person stated, he wished to understand more, but the museum had left him too stunned (*hayraan*) to do this. Ilyas Anjum, whom I met while he was showing his nieces round

the museum, was a regular visitor living and working as a photocopier technician just behind the museum in the Old Anarkali area. Ilyas professed that he liked looking at antique objects and tried to see in them reflections of how people lived in the past and their sense of being. When I asked Ilyas's opinion on visitor motivation, he stated: 'Most people come just for recreation; they come here to look around and say they have seen the museum. However, some people I have seen they take notes and try to make sense of the things; maybe it is for their knowledge or library, but as far as I know, they have an interest in the things, to learn something.'⁸¹

The perception of the Lahore Museum thus cannot be reduced to opposing motivations of learning versus entertainment,⁸² because for the public there is no clash or unease in stating that they wish to do both. Interestingly enough, in a similar stance to the museum staff, most people held the viewpoint that although they were engaged in learning/enjoying, others, particularly villagers, were less interested in any educational benefit. However, this suspicion of other visitors is undercut by the recognition that pleasure and inquisitiveness are experienced by all visitors, since the museum is a different and exciting place, allowing visitors to see in reality things they heard or read about. As Irum Bhutto from Sheikhpura suggested: 'People come for history and not recreation. Look, people are here, and obviously they will learn something . . . there is a real difference between being told and actually seeing it with [one's] own eyes.'⁸³ This desire to see with one's own eyes was a key reason for visiting, and the visual affect experienced guaranteed that objects stayed in visitors' memory, alluring a return to see the objects again and refresh their memories (*yaadash*)—perhaps not in the conventional sense of pedagogic knowledge, but visitors want to interact with displayed objects and learn. So, what kind of resonance occurs (Greenblatt 1991)?

Familiar, Attractive, and Wondrous

The visitors' physical movements enliven the Lahore Museum, and likewise the building's physicality influences their mindset and the visual encounters that take place by creating a background atmosphere that is mutually habituated by viewer and object. Several visitors commented that the museum feeling was reminiscent of being in a Mughal monument or library owing to the architectural features and the layout,⁸⁴ although for many others it was incomparable and had a unique sense of place. The museum was appreciated practically in terms of maintenance—cleanliness, security, and lack of pollution—as well as in its atmosphere (*mahaul*) described as 'decent' for a public place, which meant conducive for family visits and suitable for female relatives. The relative peace, in

comparison to life outside the museum, was an attractive characteristic, which Saima Taufail appreciated: 'The peaceful atmosphere . . . is totally different. A home or bazaar has its own atmosphere, but there in the museum it is kind of old—old and like we are watching old films. . . . I feel like this when I go there, is something there, you feel like you have come to a place that existed in the past and is very different.'⁸⁵

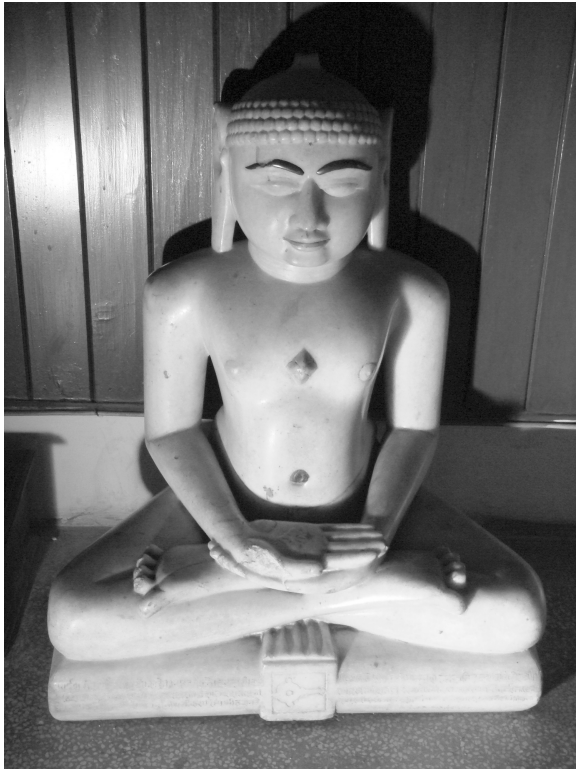
The Lahore Museum as a whole thus produces an effect that results in embodied feelings and reactions, which are not theatrical atmospherics on behalf of the museum but involve imaginative leaps by visitors aided by the museum's persisting colonial archive/representation, which gives it a tenacious self-orientalising quality and adds to its curious/*ajaiib* essence. Tanveer Akhtar, an engineer and movie maker/photographer from Qila Lakshman Singh in Lahore, recalling his visit remembered: 'In the *Ajaib Ghar*, when I entered, I felt that I was in a very mysterious place. . . . I mean the atmosphere that is created, the dim lights, and then on top of it the things, mostly from the past—so immediately you think you are living in the past.'⁸⁶ This absorptive quality of the museum and the feelings elicited can equally cause apprehension for some, making them unsure about their visit. Ayesha Ashfaq, a Master's student from Mozang, visited the museum with her two friends, and in retrospect deliberated: 'When I went home I thought I should have been scared, but I was not. You know when one of my friends went for the first time she fainted . . . all those statues kept there like the one of *Kali devi* . . . so the place and the things have the ability to scare you . . . also I wondered whether in the evening once everyone had left all the objects moved around [*laughed*]'.⁸⁷

In a palpable way, the museum building and galleries housing the objects leave a vivid impression on the visitor that inspires awe and imagination, attracting and drawing the visitor to experience it further. Kuratul-Nainh from Naushehra said: 'I really like this place. I thought it was only one gallery, but there is more, and even though I cannot understand how these things were created or how they work, I am amazed by them.'⁸⁸ Fondness for the Lahore Museum is built on its ability to adduce emotive responses that are different, and it is considered to be a place where negotiation of meaning can take place bound not by accurate comprehension of an object but an imaginative sensual relationship. This willingness to explore/feel the strange or new is actively sought and enjoyed; so, contrary to expectation, little is disliked simply because it is not understood.

In fact it was difficult to delve into visitors' disappointment with the museum, since for many there was no question of disliking anything—dislike represented a negative mindset, and one visitor from Multan stated: 'We simply cannot dislike anything, if it was a question of disappointment we would not have come here.'⁸⁹ So, an aesthetic dislike of objects

was not a significant issue; what did manifest itself was a discomfort in viewing some objects, particularly the ubiquitous *bhut* (illus. 37), which were thought to be un-Islamic (*baymazbhi*) and not Pakistani. However, a qualification is necessary—for most visitors it was the profuse presence of *bhut* that was disconcerting, rather than the idols per se, since many found them highly attractive to view, especially the Radha and Krishna statues emanating beauty and radiance. Disappointment was expressed by some in not finding more Islamic culture on display that could be linked to national identity. As Abid from Hyderabad articulated: ‘Islamic things should be kept here or those from the Mughal era or from Turkey, not Hindu and Buddhist things that are not Pakistani’⁹⁰ (illus. 38).

As mentioned, the *bhut* are overt targets for dislike, since they are interpreted as signs of idolatrous worship in an Islamic society, but other discomforts also exist. For Rukhsana Saif from Karachi, the problem was with clay models in the Fabrics Gallery (illus. 39): ‘There was a bit



37 Marble Jain Tirthankara (nineteenth century, Gujaranwala) in the Jain Mandir Gallery



38 Standing figures of Bodhisattva displayed in the Gandhara Gallery

of difficulty when [one was] looking at the two models of marriage and funeral. These should not be kept so close, as then you have happiness [*kushi*] and sadness [*ghum*] next to each other. It is difficult to look at.⁹¹ Dislike of an object, then, is not a consequence of anxiety concerning a lack of understanding or information, despite some people asking for more labels and guides; it is an unfamiliar or disturbing visual-emotive response. Visitors also exhibit apprehension toward unsuitable public objects that transgress moral values, such as nude sculptures,⁹² which allow the museum to be accused of inappropriate behaviour. Overall, the visitors' accommodation of the variety of collections made for a pleasant surprise and highlights the fact that visitor consumption is initially affected by visual resonance or physical disturbance, and such experiences are particularly evident in regard to those objects said to be pleasurable.

Trying to establish visitors' partiality toward one gallery or another elicited weak responses from most visitors, who were of the opinion that all galleries⁹³ were 'good' (*acchi*). However, with a slight alteration of emphasis from 'favourite' to 'enjoyable' or 'pleasurable,' visitors identified specific galleries that were more attractive than others, including Islamic, Contemporary Paintings, Ethnological III

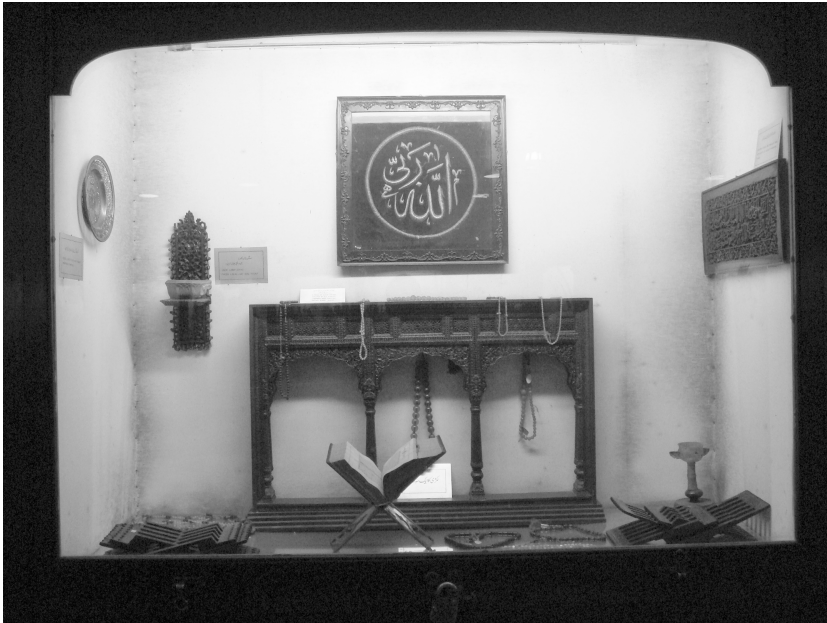


39 Clay models in the Ethnological III Gallery depicting a *Tazia* procession and a funeral scene

(Fabrics), and General.⁹⁴ Visitors' preference was based on interest and some previous knowledge or awareness about displayed objects—in the sense of resonance used by Stephen Greenblatt (1991),⁹⁵ whereby an object has the power to reach beyond the museum's formal boundaries into the larger world of the viewer and its complex dynamic cultural forces. This interpretative extension is brought into the museum with visitors' gazes; the visitors then try to construe objects within frames that are initially drawn from local particularity—literal and allegorical⁹⁶—thus vernacularising museum consumption from the first instance.

Note here that labels have very little impact in determining the meaning/resonance of objects, because most labels are basic at best—name, province, date—and provide only a starting point from which to embellish understanding.⁹⁷ In terms of literal resonance, the Islamic Gallery was easily comprehended, because it exhibited religion, culture, and Mughal heritage. As Saida Abdul from Sialkot Panwal told me: '[I prefer the] Islamic [Gallery], because at least we have an understanding and recognition . . . knowledge, we know something about those things and so we can like them'⁹⁸ (illus. 40).

The allegorical can appear at first to be mere disparate associations within the remit of a resonating object—for example, Taslim Akhtar



40 Quranic manuscripts, religious accoutrements, and a piece of *Gulaf-i-Ka'aba* (covering from the Ka'aba in Mecca) displayed in the Islamic Gallery

from Karachi,⁹⁹ when viewing the antiquity and visual narrative of the Buddha's life (illus. 41) in the Gandhara Gallery, was reminded of the old houses and artefacts in her home village near Mirpurkhas. The variety of objects on display in the galleries can be bewildering, but visitors' attempts to build an interpretation are resolute and usually start with visitors' imagining how an object fits into some aspect of their own society and culture. Interpretation of such visitor interaction can make analysis appear generalised at times, yet this polysemous quality is what makes the Lahore Museum a success, since it incorporates different degrees of resonance while also augmenting wonder. A sense of wonder is understood as the ability of an object to arrest a viewer through exalted attention (ibid.), perhaps through uniqueness or intense attraction of the visitors' gaze, and, as Greenblatt (ibid.) notes, *both* resonance and wonder are concurrent.

The presence of wonder and resonance is certainly evident at the Lahore Museum, where they actively mix to constitute interactions between object and subject. This duality is akin to the notion of 'resonance-reverberation' evoked by Gaston Bachelard,¹⁰⁰ whereby both (de)familiarisation and (dis)identification occur simultaneously for the subject. Applying this understanding, I suggest that visitor



41 *Jataka* display of Queen Maya's dream and its interpretation in the Gandhara Gallery (second century C.E.)

interpretation at the Lahore Museum is a kind of flux that employs differing interpretative strategies to connect and elucidate meanings/feelings between subject/object. To begin with, there is a strategy that recognises the objects' mundane quality: although originally collected as part of colonial objectification and preservation of craft design (Chapter 1), the same objects now transmute into everyday artefacts by virtue of survival. A. Shehzad from Chinot found the Akbari wooden doors (illus. 42) most interesting, 'as I am from a rural area and we still have doors like this and similar work can still be seen there.'¹⁰¹ Recourse to 'my' or local culture implicitly connects and prompts cultural memory work exemplified by brass/copper utensils in the General Gallery, which many said were *puranay bartan* ('old utensils') that they remember owning and using but that now have been replaced by plastic. This nostalgic resonance was linked to discussion on a *khandani*¹⁰² way of life and traditional objects of this social unit—epitomised in the delight of viewing a *charpai* ('bed'), *chulha* ('cooker'), *chimta* ('tong'), and *charka* ('spinning wheel') in the Punjab Section of the Ethnological I Gallery (illus. 43)—because they were seen to denote 'our' heritage. Previous knowledge and local particularity anchor and connect subject and object, drawing them into mutual visual contract, understanding, and discourse.



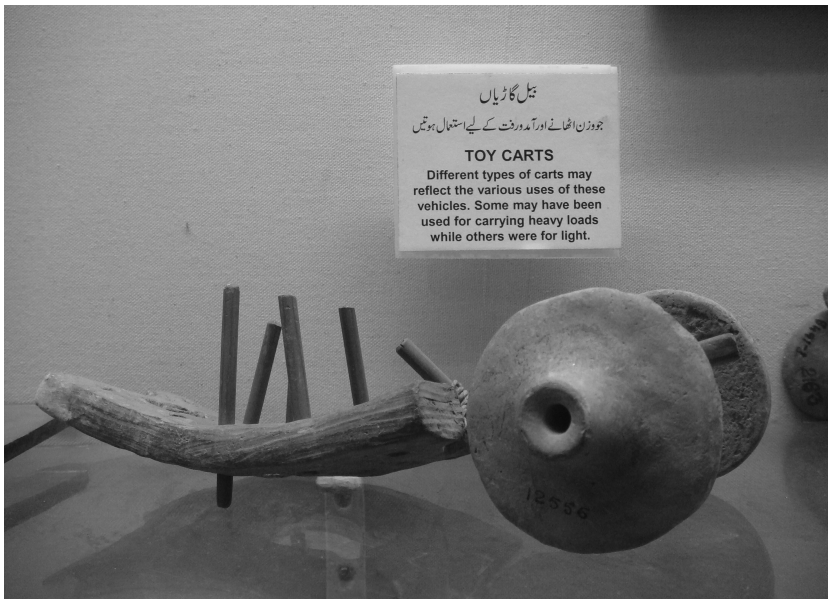
42 Wooden doors in Akbari style from Lahore (sixteenth century)

Ghulam Nabi from Chichawatni, Multan District, while admiring a terracotta horse-and-cart from Moenjodaro (*illus.* 44), stated that he liked it: ‘I am a *zamindar*, and so I know what it is and how it works, and I was just telling my friend this!’¹⁰³ Yet, such resonance and familiarity were tinged with an arresting quality for visitors, who were amazed to see their ordinary objects—typically found in villages, bazaars, and, recently, industrial/handicraft exhibitions—displayed as unique objects worthy of spectatorship.¹⁰⁴ Singularisation and decontextualisation of ‘living’ objects in the past and present are now resocialised by the indigenous gaze, although with an element of curious wonder and attraction toward the past in opposition to present-day modernity.

Attraction, as an arresting power of the object, was frequently accompanied by pleasure and astonishment in visitors who marvelled at the quality, aesthetic beauty, and/or overwhelming nature of some objects, particularly handiwork. As Nazia from Shahdara commented: ‘The hand-made objects are so attractive they pull [*khainchtay*] us towards



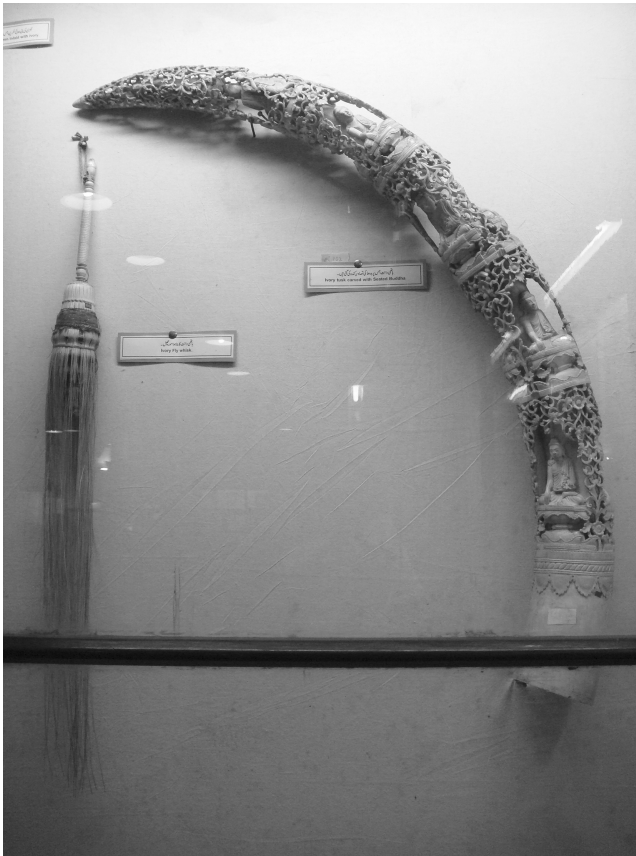
43 Punjab section of the Ethnological I Gallery



44 Terracotta cart from Moenjodaro (2600–1500 B.C.E.) displayed in the Prehistoric and Indus Valley Civilisation Gallery

them.’¹⁰⁵ The ‘pull’ described by Nazia was a fascination in trying to decipher the unique and seemingly impossible feats of human skill in making such objects, which for many were outcomes of divine beauty and artistic endowment.¹⁰⁶ Repeatedly mentioned were the ivory carvings/miniature figures and handicrafts displayed variously in the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery, General Gallery (illus. 45), and the Islamic Gallery. Ejaz Ali tried to explain this feeling and the imaginative interaction that visitors engage in:

So, when you see the things you think of the craftsmen and how brilliant they were in their art of sculpting or designing or engraving. . . . These things, when we see them in the *Ajaib Ghar*, they have a strong impact on our minds and hearts, and you feel proud that we are the owners of this



45 Carved tusk with Buddha figures and ivory fly whisk displayed in the General Gallery

ancient heritage. Our culture is buried in them, and when we look at the work done by our ancestors, its quality and the heights their art reached and that after all these centuries it still impresses us . . . their handicraft is so powerful that the machine work of today cannot compete . . . the skill they must have had amazes you, and you think were they human or some sort of *jinn* who made these things.¹⁰⁷

Ejaz Ali's statement in a very direct way shows how the opinions of the 'uneducated' are very similar to those of the Gallery In-Charges, in that visitors do consider the cultural and heritage values encapsulated in the objects on display, again subverting the demeaning label. The works of previous artisans were appreciated for their specific history, their makers' skills, and their remarkable form's ability to touch the heart (*dilkbush*). As Sabra from Mardan expressed: 'All these things are so wonderful and make me happy, my heart is touched.'¹⁰⁸ And so the aesthetic appreciation instilled by colonial art reformers/educationalists paradoxically lingers among the contemporary rustics. Other objects that captivated and enchanted many visitors included the bronze statue of Queen Victoria in the Arms and Armoury Gallery, whose size and imposing presence were felt by Afsha from Karachi, who commented: 'She is shown as quite a large lady, and she has a *rooh* ["spirit"]—it is very nice, as you feel this is just how a queen should be.'¹⁰⁹

In contradiction to the objections raised by some people about the display of numerous *bhut*, Asif from Shahdara found their unique presence in the museum alluring: '*Bhut mata*, the idols from India, I liked those, as they have an attraction in the way their faces and hands are made—it was very nice to look at them.'¹¹⁰ From the resonance of everyday objects that are enjoyed through recontextualisation, wonder takes over in the pull and attraction of other objects, and it is precisely at this point that the element of *ajaiab/ajeeb* ('strange') or the curious comes into play as a legitimate mode of visitor interaction in South Asian museums.

The most consistent and recurrent image of local museum visitors is that of someone seeking the strange, curious, and wondrous—the *ajaiib*, however, what quality exactly makes things *ajaiib* still remains unclear. Even today, visitors defiantly affirm that some objects are strange. So, what is being referred to? It turns out that the *ajaiib* or strange quality of objects is due to their absence from contemporary culture and people's scopical regimes, which also endows them with a quality of newness, which Ejaz Ali clarified by stating: 'We call them *ajaiib* because the things have not passed before our vision [*nazar*], or they are from two or three hundred years before we were born . . . and so are no longer here.'¹¹¹ The historical/temporal distance between the visitors' present and an object's 'other' past(s) creates this aura of the *ajaiib*, which grips and fascinates the

visitors, who try to appropriate it by imagining what this past was like. As Tanveer Akhtar said: 'It is *ajeeb* from the point of view that those things are not from our time. . . . I mean, if you keep a pair of jeans and T-shirt from the present, [they] will not appear strange . . . but those things are from a period, a time that had been passed [*sic*].'¹¹² The Lahore Museum is an *Ajaib Ghar*, because it displays curiosities from the past that once circulated as part of society but now are unique artefacts appearing to be strange. As Saima Taufail commented: 'Yes they are. . . . We do not get to see these types of objects, *murti* of those people, ivory antiquities, their clothes . . . we have not seen before, and when we look at them they are new things for us.'¹¹³ *Ajaib* as an interaction and interpretative strategy cannot remain an indiscriminate naive interest that is directly opposed to learned comprehension and knowledge acquisition; it actually operates as the reverse of resonance, starting from wonder and moving on to some recontextualisation—literal, allegorical, or both.

Wonder and indecipherability in the minds of visitors can generate further curiosity as a form of disbelief at displays. For example, a couple of girls in the Islamic Gallery liked a large pot on exhibit that was said to be made of clay and coated with poison, but to them it looked metallic, and the layer of poison intrigued them.¹¹⁴ The pull of perceived museum deception or trickery effects creates a space in which visitors negotiate some meaning or idea about the object. As Naeem from Behra, Sargodha, claimed: 'I am not sure what is realistic or imaginary; it is all a bit confusing, but I am trying to make sense of it.'¹¹⁵ Images in the Contemporary Paintings Gallery were especially thought of in dualistic terms of realism/trickery, such as a portrait of a seated girl (*illus. 46*), which many found hard to believe was not a photograph. Attracted by her totally Eastern look, many visitors would stand fixated by the image, trying to assess its reality while taking pleasure in the Eastern values portrayed. Other popular paintings included a village scene with buffalo and one depicting a windstorm—both by Ustad Allah-Bux—the illusory powers of which intrigued visitors, since they said that each image (buffalo in the former and windstorm in the latter) 'moved' when they walked from one side to the other. Such artistic creativity was appreciated not as an aesthetic or formal quality but for the brilliance of creating an illusionary effect that was felt by the viewer, who, comparing these to the other abstract paintings, could understand what was depicted *and* be amazed by it.

The trick-effect of the Allah-Bux images was opposed by visitors viewing objects exhibiting realism in narratives of tradition and culture, which ironically was often credited to the clay models (*illus. 47*) on display in the Fabrics Gallery. As Muzahir Hasan from Krishanagar opined: 'They are so natural looking and don't seem like they could have been made by hand . . . they show reality.'¹¹⁶ The claim for lucid visualisation



46 Portrait of a lady sitting (pen and ink on paper) by Iqbal Mehdi, displayed in the Contemporary Paintings Gallery

and representation of culture in the clay models raises the issue of authenticity, since the clay models were referred to by the museum as ‘toys’; yet visitors thought more than anything else that the models depicted their authentic culture. It seems that for visitors authenticity was less about the traces of history left on antiquities or masterpieces that lend credence to historical, cultural, and monetary value, or their archaeological chronology, than it was about feeling through interpretation—in the iconic and allegorical readings as related to ideas of ‘our’ culture and history.

This pluralistic nature of interpretation, like/dislike, and understanding of objects at the Lahore Museum means that it is difficult to reduce visitors to a specific set of museum behaviour or consumption practices. Equally, it is misleading to state that the subjective experience in South Asian museums such as the Lahore Museum is simply an interest in the *ajab*, understood in orientalist terms and signifying a form of consumption that is rudimentary and improper in its appropriation of



47 Clay figurines on display in Ethnological III Gallery

the museum. However, as I hope the preceding discussion shows, this seemingly inappropriate mode, as opposed to a Eurocentric notion of interpretation, at the Lahore Museum encompasses a spectrum of strategies employed by visitors that range from everyday resonance to attraction to new/deceptive objects. In a way, divergent responses should be expected in a museum such as the Lahore Museum, where eclectic colonial vestiges remain intact to a large degree, with little decolonisation (Chapter 2). The excess of artefacts allows visitors to marvel at the variety on display, which they cannot see elsewhere, and so they experience objects as new and exciting visions that captivate their imagination; for this reason, the question of finding anything missing from the museum was unthought of by visitors—generally, there was *too much* to see. One way to understand the discrepancy between an *ajajib* interpretation that advances local appropriation as legitimate and the pedagogy of the institution, which itself has not taken on wider ideological narratives of the State (Chapter 2), is to comprehend how they relate to the representation of history and culture as objective reality in the museum. Fundamentally, local ideas of history, culture, and identity are equally situated in other participatory social arenas, events and, feelings that are shared with the wider community (Bharucha 2000). And, as visitors' remarks in this chapter demonstrate, references are made to the

history/culture on show—but in the sense of attraction, do local visitors appropriate/translate the Lahore Museum as a place to seek overt signs of history or culture?

HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE, BUT NOT MY IDENTITY

A concern for viewing cultural heritage (*sakafat*) was claimed by many of the Lahore Museum's visitors as something positive and necessary for preservation of the past. They envisioned the museum as capable of making the past visible and keeping it alive by refreshing cultural memory, especially for future generations. In this sense, the museum was regarded as a place that archived history (*tehreek*), and it was considered natural for people to be interested in their past. As Raja Amir Khan Junjua stressed: 'It is *insanni fitrat* ["human nature"] that we want to see all this at the museum, as it is our past and because, like a person remembers things that are no longer with us, so we remember the past . . . it reminds us to think about who we are.'¹¹⁷ The recognition that the past is exhibited at the museum is easily achieved by visitors, who are amazed at being able to witness the achievements and glories of past cultures. Ghulam Sarwar from Karachi felt that 'When I see these things I get interested, as they show how our ancestors lived . . . their culture . . . and so on.'¹¹⁸ However, visitors' historical association with the Lahore Museum's exhibits differentiates our ancestral past from that which represents the Others' past, and so maybe it would not be wrong to suggest that the museum displays 'histories.' As Tanveer Akhtar stated:

History is there, our glorious history and memorable things from our past, religious things, things that we have read about or heard of, like Jehangir's coins or what Mughal emperors used to wear, swords . . . and when you see them you feel and remember your glorious way of life, *obviously* you do being a Muslim. Also you see other culture's historical objects like Buddhism's and Sikhism's.¹¹⁹

This selective approach to history means that personal identification is partial and only with collections that index or generate feelings of pride in Pakistani, Islamic, or Mughal history and culture, while collections representing the Others' history are appreciated without being claimed as 'own.'

The Lahore Museum, although thought to be ideal for keeping *meh-foozh* ('safe') the history and cultural heritage of the past as part of social memory to prevent cultural amnesia, was, however, not associated with contemporary identity. It was difficult for many to forge a direct link between the exhibited past and present-day culture, which was said to be absent from the museum because it resides in 'our' way

of living (*raehain-saehain*), in ‘our’ customs and traditions (*reeti rivaj*), which have stable core values while simultaneously evolving as society develops. For visitors, this lived way of being could not be located or fixed to a collection of objects in the museum, because traditions and identity were performed and inscribed on the body (Bennett 2003) more than museumified. Tanveer Akhtar illustrated visitors’ inability to attach their culture and identity to the museum when he described his wife Irum’s actions when she brought in some tea and snacks, prompting him to quip: ‘See this is our culture, the Lahori way! . . . we like to eat well, dress well and like to live . . . in our *mohallay* where everyone knows everyone, so this is our culture and we are proud of it.’¹²⁰ For Tanveer, the Lahore Museum holds the culture and identity of his ancestors but not his own, since he is a man of today for whom history counts for little, and it is all about reputation and the right character:

I can call it my culture but not my identity . . . we can say we have no clear idea or lack of knowledge about what our identity is . . . but it can never be, or no one will ever acknowledge, that [the museum] is our identity. There is a very real difficulty in admitting this. Maybe one feels shame in it or just do not know that this is our identity or our heritage. I mean it is, it is our ancestors’ and land’s heritage and culture and history, but you cannot relate to it personally, it is cultural inheritance but not my identity.¹²¹

Identity (*pehchaan/sanakth*) and the Lahore Museum then are not synonymous in the mind of visitors, as noted by Tanveer, since the concept is split between ancestral identity and a way of living that incorporates a way of being in contemporary Pakistan. This identity association with the museum is further complicated by the fact that there is a crisis in the representation of cultural identity in Pakistan beyond the image perpetuated by political ideology of an Islamic state with ideal Muslim citizens, which itself is under attack from conservative elements and the increased infiltration of Jihadi ideology, Talibanisation of society, and Wa’habi-inspired Islam (Chapter 2). Pakistan’s ideological construct has failed, at a local level, to replace identification and affiliation with class, caste,¹²² religious sects, and regional and language identity that cut across a weak national identity. Identity, then, for many Lahorites, as analysed by Richard Murphy McGill (1996), is incoherent, ambiguous, and better understood as a cubist complex of debate among the various facets—national, religious, Punjabi—of culture and language, caste, *biradari*, morality, and modernity that retain social, political, and cultural ‘fuzziness’ (Kaviraj 1992). Within this complex, people hold onto the most stable aspects, which for many Lahoris involve associations mixing Punjabi culture, Muslim identity, tradition, and modernity.

Trying to classify the Lahore Museum in relation to any one of these identities is possible only at a basic level in the displays extolling overtly religio-nationalist narratives of the self, such as the Independence Movement Gallery, Shaheed Gallery, and galleries exhibiting regional cultures—Ethnological I, III. The rest of the museum remains distant in terms of identity formation or affirmation and hence a curious institution containing objects that are deemed attractive but unrelated to visitors' own culture. In this way, the Lahore Museum fails to explicate fully how its objects and collections can be useful to visitors in constructing a broader self-identity rooted in the land that is not obscured by the constricting vision of nationalist ideology. A contestation or broadening of the nationalist vision is possible at the Lahore Museum, since it has kept safe evidence of the pluralistic history, culture, and civilisations that make up Pakistan's past—Buddhist culture of the northeast, the Indus Valley, Hindu civilisations, and Sikh Kingdom—a religious and cultural diversity that is missing in other accounts of identity. However, unclear narratives, an obsession with protecting masterpieces for the Gallery In-Charges (Chapter 3), and neglect of visitors prevent the museum from being part of, or alleviating problematics concerning, society's contemporary identity, culture, and heritage.

Visitors' refusal to allow cultural identity to be associated with the museum is reflected in visitor responses: not a single person made this connection. Overwhelmingly, identity was initially attached to being a Muslim and its practice and to religious festivals such as *Eid*; identity was also present in visitors' clothes, food, Pakistani cricket team, and Mughal monuments. The Muslim identity referred to here is not the politically inflected religious dogma that informs much nationalist and counter-nationalist discourse in Pakistan; it is recourse to cultural aspects as a way of life. Ilyas Anjum reminded me that Muslim identity is based on the dualism of *deen aur duniya* ('religion and this world'), with both being equally important.¹²³ Identity among Lahoris, then, is more of a complex fluid entity that incorporates many aspects and is most easily correlated with those cultural performances wherein shared values allow for the formation of collective identities (Freitag 1989) beyond the nation-state. As Saima Taufail explained, her identity was attached to

our festivals. That is our true identity—like *Eid*, 12 *Rabil-al-awwal*, where the procession passes in front of our house . . . *Basant*, these occasions are for enjoyment, too . . . because the things at the museum are not surviving in our life, they were here in the past, so we cannot say they are our identity now . . . in a roundabout way we can say our history is kept there . . . and culture, but we cannot say identity, that the museum is our identity, we cannot say that.¹²⁴

The Lahore Museum's inability to represent and bridge past and present identities and histories of Pakistani society is compounded by the fact that many visitors see their own identity and culture as something living, palpable in the everyday festivals and cultural activities that are cyclical and thus repeatedly performed (Bharucha 2000). People, then, do not necessarily visit the Lahore Museum with the intention to consume or experience their own culture or history—although they show delight if either is recognisable in objects and it is as a part of contemporary life. The culture on display at the museum stands in contrast to the vibrant and participatory social arena beyond it, and so this historical representation appears as a static sedimentation of cultural identities, while visitors occupy a social and cultural world where identity is internally stable—exemplified by the reference to Muslim culture—yet on the outside is living, evolving, and debated with the dialectics of modernity, authenticity, and tradition. As Saima Taufail stated: 'I am a Muslim, that is my identity, but society and culture today [are] concerned with things *mod-scod* ["modern"].'¹²⁵ These living cultural dialectics are not visible at the museum for visitors to subjectively experience and identify with on a personal level or to use in reaffirming their cultural identity. Despite a gallery devoted to Islamic culture, most people were of the opinion that it was underrepresented, and at a regional level the Punjab section of Ethnological I Gallery was considered incomplete. As Nazia from Shahdara complained: 'The culture of Radha and Krishna is shown, but we would like to see that of Sohni-Mahiwal,¹²⁶ as we want to see the culture of the Punjab and Pakistan, as that is our culture really.' Visitors strongly desired to see 'our' culture and identity on display and lamented their absence at many levels; conversely, if any signs of their culture were evident, delight was expressed. As Raja Amir Khan Junjua, on viewing signs of what he saw as Rajput culture, confessed: 'We can see our Rajput heritage here. They were the rulers of India and their things are kept here . . . [and these objects] makes me feel very proud, as I myself am a Rajput.'

In the subjective experiences of the Lahore Museum recounted here, history and cultural heritage were identified, but extending appropriation to the level of personal identity formation and affirmation proved not to be easily possible. First, the sparse reorganisation of the museum's collections along cultural or political identity lines (Chapter 2) leaves ample room for visitors to interpret the museum as a mixture of past culture and wonders. Second, identity itself is a complex issue in Pakistan, where, at the macro level, national identity has not replaced local affiliation, and so for many the sense of being Pakistani is evident only at heightened moments of patriotism—war or cricket—and, at a micro level, identity is most often associated with ethnicity, such as being Punjabi, Sindhi, or Balochi, and is felt most keenly through language

and cultural festivals. In other words, identity is a lived experience, and its many facets are continuously negotiated outside the museum's walls.

The Lahore Museum is not given the cultural status that museums may have in Euro-American society, where one goes to consume one's own, or an Other's cultural/historical identity, and so visitor interpretations do not focus overtly on this appropriation of the museum; instead, history and past cultures are consumed as spectacle and wonder. Since there is little personal identification, many of the collections remain *ajaiib* ('distanced'), but paradoxically this subjective experience is also of attraction ('closeness'). If the Lahore Museum is assessed by the Eurocentric notion of a museum—how far it contributes toward a sense identity and community—little is gained, since these associations exist in other social arenas, and it is only by taking into account subjective understandings and interpretations that some sense can be made of the way people actively interact and appropriate the museum. The South Asian museum visitor has been derided for too long as not being capable of using the museum properly and being concerned only with the *ajaiib*; however, if South Asian museology is to develop its own culturally appropriate sensibilities, it, too, must understand how these concepts operate among its visitors, who at times arrive at conclusions that are close to what the museum would like to narrate. Visitors' interpretations may not be grounded in pedagogical readings informed by textual or linguistic knowledge but in the embodied and affective spheres, where they identify, feel, and imagine. As James Clifford (1985) comments: the attachment of identity and cultural wealth to material objects is not a universal aesthetic.

So, who are the Lahore Museum visitors? They cannot be said to be the illiterate/rustic but individuals who use their knowledge and experience of the socialised world they inhabit—a locally situated cultural capital—to interpret the museum for their own needs and desires. For many visitors, a vast amount of objects at the Lahore Museum are not present in their contemporary culture or society, thus allowing interpretation of them as attractions and curiosities. However, this sense of undecipherability is the pleasure, just as Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) notes for the allure of art objects to visitors in the West, where the unknown enables the imagination to flourish. It is necessary for the museum in South Asia to take note and understand their visitors as genuinely interested in gaining knowledge *and* pleasure from what they view; were it not for visitors, the colonial museums of South Asia would become the dust houses many think they are. Fakir Syed Aijazuddin poignantly recalled the intense attraction visitors have for the museum:

I still remember, and it still motivates me: one day I went to the museum and I noticed a family, the husband and sons were walking, the mother

was a cripple and she was dragging herself along on a *pirri*, must have come from a lower-middle-class family, not as if she was a beggar . . . so here was this woman with her sons and husband in the museum, and she was dragging herself from showcase to showcase . . . her motivation was inspiring, and I was fascinated when I saw this woman—that this is really a thirst for knowledge, for her to come into the museum. Why, she could have gone to any stall and had fruit juice or something, but it was a choice, just that, just that.¹²⁷

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Chapter 5

NOKTA NAZAR¹ OF THE LAHORE MUSEUM'S 'AUDIENCE'



I am convinced that a museum in the East which ignores the display of curios, or which neglects “attractions,” will not—at the present stage of education—satisfy the requirements of the public. What is urgently needed is to stimulate the imagination of the people, but a purely scientific or formal arrangement of exhibits can never succeed in effecting this great end. The mosques in India, as well as the temples, do not neglect the custom which was so common in European cathedrals and churches, or go back still further to the religious shrines of Greece and Rome, in which curiosities in the form of votive offerings were displayed and Murray mentions, as an example, ostrich eggs . . . a photograph of the shrine of Moiyud-din-Chisti, or Kwaja Saheb, at Ajmere, which showed a number of such eggs suspended from the ceiling. There are other curiosities in the Durgah, the drums and great brass candlestick from Cheetore, which the former Emperor Akbar presented after the conquest of that famous hill fortress in 1567–1568. In Delhi, amongst other treasures in the great mosque, are shewn a reputed hair from the beard of the Prophet of Islam and his shoes. . . . Temples in India contain many jewels and much rich clothing in their treasures, but these articles are usually only displayed upon the images and not in the treasury itself. It is by the sculpture on the outer walls of their shrines that the priests attract attention, and through the eye teach the myths on which the exoteric part of their religion is based and made popular.

—Colonel Thomas Holbein Hendley²

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ATTRACTIONS AND THE MUSEUM SPIRIT

Thomas Holbein Hendley wrote the preceding passage in 1914 as part of a monograph entitled *Indian Museums*. While commenting on a proposal to construct a comprehensive museum of Indian collections in the ‘Capital of the Empire’—London—he uniquely ruminates over suitable attributes for a successful museum in the East. As might be expected of a colonial official, Hendley explicitly invokes elements of the Wonder House, stating that the prevailing idea in the East of a museum remains firmly tied around the notion of the *Ajaibghar*,³ with the principal attractions being *tufachis*, or *tuhfajat*, meaning ‘rarities’ or ‘curiosities.’⁴ Hendley’s employment of this idiom, reflecting in part conceptualisation among Indian masses, did not simply express an orientalisising alterity but suggests it was fundamental to comprehending popular use and interpretation of museums in the East. At the outset, Hendley states that the definition of the museum in the West, at the beginning of the twentieth century, as an institution for the scholar or ‘man of science’ was too narrow to explain the situation for Indian museums, since it ignored the alluring pull of attractions. Hendley explicitly highlights that both instruction and entertainment were necessary and critical in developing interest among the Indian public by rousing the spirit of enquiry through attractions ‘lead[ing] to most valuable results’ (1914:33). This recognition has close resonance with what I expounded in the previous chapter, where I investigated the concept of *ajaiib* as a specific way of encountering the museum space that did not necessarily confound the desire to learn, but instead supplemented it. Likewise, Hendley does not entrust the experience and sensation of curiosity to naive understanding but describes it as a universal instinctual quality possessed by all museumgoers. For modern museums in the West, he posits that this reception of objects and the subsequent emotive response have been overshadowed and suppressed by the quest for, and emphasis on, science and order.

Backing his thoughts by quoting from William Morris’s October 1898 lecture on *Art and the Beauty of the Earth*, in which Morris states that museums, except pictures and sculptures, are full of household goods of the past, which ‘some people look upon . . . simply as curiosities, but you and I have been taught most properly to look upon them as priceless treasures that can teach us all kinds of things,’⁵ Hendley remarks that ‘surely these wise words justify the existence of the museum as a House of Wonders in our own day’ (ibid.). For Hendley, museums and exhibitions in the East or West were inherently caught up in displaying ‘amusements’/‘attractions’ (ibid.:34) as a way of bringing the subject and object into contact with each other through curiosity—in particular

for the Indian museum public, who were conditioned to respond in this manner by other cultural encounters (shrine or temple, which offered a particular visual invitation). In addressing the needs of local visitors, Hendley was essentially questioning whether 'Indian museums [were] fulfilling their utmost . . . meeting the wants of the general public, students and experts . . . [and] if not how to add to their value' (ibid.). Even today, this monograph remains distinctively relevant in its attempts to explore a vernacular perspective on museum production/consumption by positively assessing expectations and experiences of the museum that deviate from the hegemonic norm, and so it is worth considering a little more.

Hendley's centralisation of curiosities and attractions in satisfying visitors' needs was linked to the fact that these opportunities for spectatorship stimulated the imagination, which in turn it, was hoped, would complement learning as prevalent in other cultural arenas. The overt suggestion was that museums in India needed to foster a 'museum effect' (Alpers 1991) similar to that found in shrines and temples—Indian versions of European cathedrals and Greek temples, where curiosities were exhibited to attract and captivate the devotee's attention. In aligning the museum of the East with the classical and medieval shrines of Europe, Hendley was not necessarily maligning the former in terms of temporal progression or referring to the museum as a sacred site; instead, he usefully deployed this comparison to locate a mode of visual interaction and experience between museum objects and visitors within a larger social context that had been displaced in European modern museums by the concentration on linear pedagogy.⁶ He further developed and stressed ideas on locally informed modes of visual engagement that were premised on principles of pleasure and delight in seeing curiosities being 'revealed,'⁷ a process that engineered an intensified sensory, initially visual rather than linguistic, experience and spectacle that Hendley extended to the Indian public's desire for new objects. As he stated: 'The Indian is never weary of seeing something new and of talking about it. A museum is peculiarly fascinating. Its attractions are proportionate to their power of arousing his curiosity and of satisfying his love for the marvellous. In this respect he has the medieval mind and not that of the scientist.'⁸

The 'medieval' mind referred to should not be taken literally as a social evolutionary comment but as a call by Hendley for the restitution of the visitors' sensory desires when he discusses factors likely to make museums a success in colonial India, where cognitive scientific classification that sought to control wonder had not eclipsed social imagination and bodily experience. Hendley wanted museums in India to embrace this marginalised and subaltern (Prakash 1991) approach

to museums, which he justified by recourse to the popularity of other indigenous spaces that possessed what he termed a ‘museum spirit’ (Hendley 1914:39), or, in other words, a form of local exhibitionism. These insightful observations contend that perhaps one way to comprehend local visitors’ museum appropriation is by investigating it in relation to other public spaces of exhibition, arenas of visual consumption, social debate/action, and imagination; it is precisely this allusion that justifies quoting Hendley’s thoughts at length:

The large numbers of visitors to Indian Museums have often been noticed with surprise, but it is really not remarkable if we consider how little attraction there is in the ordinary Indian shops and bazaars in which rare and valuable articles are kept out of sight for very good reasons . . . the craving for excitement, and the love of the strange and curious, are quite as great as medieval times in Europe. . . . These peculiarities are kept alive most sedulously in the sphere of religion. Fairs, wayside shows, the strange feats and exhibitions of ascetics, pilgrimages, religious processions, and the special displays, all tend to keep up what we might term the museum spirit. . . . At fairs, which are generally associated with pilgrimages, all sorts of attractions are to be found. Ascetics vie with each other on exhibiting some form of self-torture. . . . The pilgrim on his way to a holy spot . . . passes perhaps the head of a living man which sticks out of the mud on the roadside . . . or on a platform he may see a great variety of images, the object of both exhibits being, of course to make money. Then there are clever triptychs and pentptychs, or little portable shrines with folding doors, on which numerous myths are painted, or paintings on cloth, etc., which the owner explains to the passer-by . . . or at places such as Hurdwar at one of the great pilgrimage fairs, or *melas*, at which small armies of ascetics attend . . . rivalling each other in the strangeness of their exhibits.⁹

By drawing attention to a ‘museum spirit’ that existed beyond the museum’s four walls, Hendley rightly claimed that the Indian museum public would anticipate similar affective attractions at the museum; however, the colonial museum ignored the presence of this active indigenous mode of consumption and belittled it as misconception ([Chapter 4](#)). Hendley’s exegesis uniquely chooses to confront and justify this misconception by comparing the performance of the museum to other ‘exhibitionary complexes’ and resituates the museum as part of preexisting social arenas, cultural consumption, and ways of seeing. By extension, this meant that interaction and participation beyond the museum—visual, sensory, and imaginative—would frame visitors’ experience and comprehension inside the museum, and so success for Indian museums hinged on employing display strategies that catered for indigenous visual/experiential predilections.

These other spaces of indigenous exhibit appropriation bolstered Hendley's conviction that the marvellous, fascinating, and imaginative were fundamental aspects of attractions, mediated by visual stimulation and accompanied by touch, smell, and ensuing sensory reactions. Hendley further exemplified this mode and affective exhibition and interaction by recalling an event he witnessed while attending one of the local fairs in Jaipur, where a Jain banker from Ajmer exhibited his visualisation of the first Jain Tirthankar's birth and descent from heaven; using gilt and brass models and figures of gods, men, animals, trees, and so on, the banker depicted palaces, sacred places, and different Jain heavens. The banker was so impressed with his display that Hendley reports one day he found him 'scattering leaves of roses and other flowers, and even small seed pearls and minute precious stones, as well as bruised spices about the models to increase, through the sense of smell as well as sight, the effect on visitors' (1914:40). Remarking on this activity, Hendley states: 'Is it not marvellous that under such conditions the wonder side of a museum is most popular' (ibid.). It is this acceptance of visual wonder and sensory arousal, allied with an imaginative curiosity that simultaneously socialised the museum as part of a wider museum spirit, which differentiates Hendley's perspective on indigenous museum consumption from other colonial accounts as it emerges from the local. Hendley's perceptive insights and term *museum spirit* are wonderfully coterminous and pertinent to what I wish to explore here—specifically, the consumption of the Lahore Museum as a visual encounter in relation to the 'interocular' (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1992, 1995) in South Asia.

The contemporary relevance of Hendley's ideas in this leap from the early twentieth century to the present day indicate that curiosity and wonder are stable and enduring components of museum culture in South Asia and not just an orientalist inflection. Persistence of these qualities was demonstrated for the Lahore Museum in the previous chapter but is evident in other South Asian museums also—for example, in the very city where Hendley was curator, Jaipur, Rupert Snell (1992), while relating his experience of researching manuscript collections, stated:

Jaipur[']s] . . . Museum of Indology . . . is a real *ajāib-khāna*, and includes such diverse artefacts as a glass *dholak*, a rabbit-hair inscribed with the *gāyatrī mantra*, many kinds of crystal, a Rs. 10,000 note issued by S. C. Bose's 'Bank of Independence,' a glass bottle with some verses of the Quran written on the inside, and a Bhutanese postage stamp in the form of a plastic gramophone recording of the national anthem.¹⁰

Interrogating concepts of 'attraction' and 'museum spirit' along with the 'interocular' (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1992, 1995), which share

a commonality in foregrounding a fluid visuality, I resocialise the Lahore Museum within the wider visualscape of the Lahore Museum, where it acts as one visual site whose consumption is congruent to other arenas—shrines, bazaars, film, and television—that both visitors and museum cohabit.

THE MUSEUM ‘EYE’

The most conspicuous issue that Hendley (1914) was debating in his monograph hovered around redefining the museum model that had its foundations in the local and was specifically attentive to the activities of the ‘eye.’ Essentially, this recourse to visuality, more specifically in South Asia its corporeal reciprocation and sensual affinity, enabled Hendley to localise the museum as one visual exhibitionary arena of wonder and imagination possessing the fluid ‘museum spirit.’ If we accept the need to begin with the local scene of cultural/historical practices and interpretation (as this book has suggested throughout), then both the museum and its visitor need to be further recontextualised within this setting. In other words, what I am specifically advocating is a socialisation of the Lahore Museum based on South Asian precepts of visuality and visual culture, but without isolating vernacular museum understandings as diametrically opposed to the global. To avoid creating an alterity, perhaps a more reasonable position for most museums in the non-West is the ‘g’ local,¹¹ where local appropriation presents one cultural reality among other intra- and transnational meanings and flows. One way to address this situation is by exploring the museum as a mode of visual consumption that is taken as the initial form of interaction, being the most direct and instinctual relationship between museum objects and visitors. Yet it must be kept in mind that the visitors’ gaze is not globally uniform, and vision itself is guided by culturally informed scopic regimes that direct the museum experience.

By highlighting the role of visual consumption in South Asian museum appropriation, I do not dichotomise museum communication into whether the ‘message’ is received or not, since these options provide limited answers and understandings of other ways of seeing the museum. Instead, my suggestion is that effectiveness of a museum should be investigated through interpretation grounded in the local cultural/visual grammar that operates within society—its beliefs, common sense, and everyday practices (*ibid.*). Research into other visual media in South Asia—soap operas and television (Das 1995; Monteiro 1998), film (Dwyer and Patel 2002; Uberoi 2001), photographic images (Pinney 1997), and chromolithographs (Pinney 2001)—have shown how consumption and interpretation are contingent on a South Asian visual

grammar that affects viewing/bodily praxis. Furthermore, this visual lexicon is not exclusive to each medium but is intertwined, creating an intervisual web/dialogue between different media that help debate as well as intensify the accretion and constitution of social and political realities (Ramaswamy 2002). However, before immersing the Lahore Museum in this expansive arena of mobile visual genres and their dialogic consumption, I situate this emphasis on visual consumption within parallel movements in museological discourse that have taken cue from research on visual communication in media studies. This focus has squarely shifted interest toward the interpretative moment in museums as a process of visual consumption, which has allowed critical museology to further empower the visitor by allowing the museum to be permeated by pluralistic meanings, negotiations, and experiences. In this regard, museum consumption now denotes an active and subjective practice similar to other forms of cultural consumption (Miller 1995). So how have the humble museum visitors been turned into cultural spectators as part of a museum 'audience' (Hooper-Greenhill 1995)?

The change in terminology whereby visitors become an audience was proposed by Hooper-Greenhill (1995), who borrowed the term from work in media reception within cultural studies at a time when the visitor was being reinserted into museological discourse (Chapter 4). This conceptual adoption was facilitated by the fact that both disciplines were preoccupied with reevaluating their respective analysis of reception and communication to reveal a nuanced subject position. Interestingly, here the more visually inclined term *audience* is also apt for accounting the experience of the Lahore Museum's public, many of whom describe their activity in such terms. As Khalid Zubair wrote: 'The museum is a delight to watch.'¹² Before examining local inflections on visual terminology as 'watching' (*dekhna*) within a South Asian context, I outline the theoretical shift that applies the subjective visual experience as a negotiation. This modification is of vital significance when one is investigating museum consumption in South Asia, since it prevents association of ocularcentric interpretation only with the Other—usually the illiterate or uneducated—and makes it relevant to all museum visitors.

Regard for visitor agency and visual interaction took on a more central role when museology opened up to an interdisciplinary outlook and amalgamated insights from research interested in reception such as media studies. Since the 1980s, media studies had rigorously theorised the audience in reaction to its own dissatisfaction with the mass communication's model, which considered audiences as passive receptacles.¹³ A 'New' discourse was put forth that worked on principles of 'Incorporation/Resistance' (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998) that did not venture to replace the text with the reader but insisted on 'negotiation' between

the two as key to the interpretative complex. Principally, this theoretical advance reflected a general move in cultural studies where the 'reader' was not obliged to take up the subject position offered by the 'text' and instead was given agency to contest power relations (Ang 1996; Morley 1992, 1995) in the 'mutual constitution' of reader/text (Hall 1999). This empowering alteration resulted in the 'New Audience Research'/'New Revisionism' of the 1980s/90s typified by David Morley's ethnography-based research on British television audiences (1992).¹⁴ In some instances this approach was criticised for blind celebration of popular creativity,¹⁵ however, as Morley (1996) pointed out, awareness of the politics of communication was crucial, and in agreement with Ang (1998), he cautioned that 'active' should not be equated with the 'political' clout to alter power relations. Hence, the principle of negotiation overcame this criticism and created room for dialogue and multiple interpretations.

Ideas around spectatorship as part of the communicative process were adopted from New Audience Research, which recognised that institutional hegemony, plural interpretations, and resistance all played a part in the eventual reception of the message. Similarly, keeping Morley (1996) and Ang's (1996) reservations in mind, I do not reify the visitor/audience, since this modification in itself would lead to an abstraction; rather, I take visual negotiation between the museum and its audience as a dialogic interaction, which in the last instance is constrained by the institution. This intervention is important to consider when one is investigating an audience's negotiation of identity and meaning through appropriation of the exhibited message, since it prevents the extreme of popular creativity as well as premature closures or totalising assumptions concerning the audience's intentions and interactions. Therefore, the museum's authority does not dissolve or mutate into hybridised forms of representation; it retains a sense control—physical and conceptual—even if only weakly, as in the case of the Lahore Museum. So when considering polysemous museum meanings or different strategies of visual interpretation, as defined in Hooper-Greenhill's (2000) 'post-museum,' one should remain wary of endless postmodern pluralism, since infinite signification is also anchored by the subject's mind and body, which also give provisional closure.

Hooper-Greenhill's (2000) agenda for a museum audience does not explicitly prise out forms of visual sensibilities within specific cultures, when the act and experience of viewing implicitly conform to socially ascribed ways of seeing, so again an uncontrolled melange of responses is even more improbable. Visuality then is an anchoring force that determines how people interact with, and what they expect from, the objects on display. By taking into account the local visitors' gaze as tied to 'vestigial dialects' (Nandy 1995) that direct vision in South Asia through a

shared grammar, one can avoid ahistorical or unsocialised celebration of reception pluralism. I do not wish to essentialise South Asian visuality, because it may share certain ways of seeing that are denied by pedagogic representation in Euro-American museums; rather, I wish to allow it to be more than local but less than global (Pinney 2004).

It is not so much the struggle over meaning between the institution and the audience's acceptance/resistance that concerns me most; I am interested in contextualising active spectatorship in relation to local visual practices and other cultural technologies with which the museum competes, similar to Ang's proposal for media: 'We should stop conceptualizing television, radio, the press, and so on, in isolation, as a series of separable independent variables having more or less clear-cut correlations with another set of dependent, audience variables.'¹⁶ Among Ang's 'so on' one could place the museum institution, because like other media it is a constructed visual text that 'performs' alongside other visual technologies and images that confirm or introduce values, identities, pleasure, and wonders for its consumers. From this perspective, once again the Lahore Museum becomes a fecund forum with the potential for a plethora of meanings/contestations in relation to other spaces that are present alongside it in the visualscape of Lahore—saints' shrines, bazaars, films, and so on.

In addition to Hooper-Greenhill, some other studies in museology have become attuned to the subjective quality of audience interpretation,¹⁷ which is contextualised by recourse to wider 'communities'¹⁸ that provide interpretative frames with which visitors negotiate viewing, meaning, and self-exhibition. Constance Perin, in proposing a theory of representation and reception, suggests that the museum public is part of the institution's 'communicative circle,' which simultaneously acknowledges the audience as immersed in social life and better analysed as 'interpretative communities' (1992), or perhaps for us here as visual interpretative communities. This local politics of interpretation can be advanced as seeking to unmask a dialectical museum communication that is reciprocally constituted (Kratz 2002). In relation to viewing South Asian collections, Richard Davis also starts with the notion of interpretative communities and observes that interpretative strategies are not natural but learned within a particular social setting and prone to change. Davis coins the phrase 'communities of response,' which he states is 'valuable for considering the plurality of ways viewers approach and encounter the visual object . . . [with] different ways of seeing animate the objects seen in new ways' (1997:9). This pluralism of interpretation/viewing strategies allows objects to perform different roles over time—historical and cultural—and reveal their polysemous nature to audiences. Museum visual interpretation is thus inherently tied up with

local meanings and practices that ground the public's gaze—and more so in South Asia, where society utilises vision and visual media not just for scopophilia but to affectively engage with imagery while negotiating collective identities and tradition/modernity, as well as exercising their social imagination. I turn next to the elucidation of this South Asian visuality, which in fact is more akin to different types of 'polyscopic' visualities (Taylor 2002:297) that rely heavily on the sensual and corporeal (Pinney 2002a) to be efficacious.

SOUTH ASIAN SCOPOPHILIA

Darshan/Dekhna

When one thinks about vision and the act of viewing/looking in South Asian society, an immediate association is with the regime of *darshan* (see Babb 1981; Eck 1981), particularly in the religious context of *puja* ('worship'). This mode of viewing is usually examined as the visual reception of sacred images in Hinduism—be they sculptural, pictorial, photographic, or human—where, by taking *darshan*, the devotee seeks blessings and plenitude through seeing and conversely being seen by the sacred image. Potency of this visual modality is identified in the reciprocation of the gaze, which enables the exchange of mutually fixating glances to the point of intensified absorption between viewer and viewed or subject and object. As a religious form of visuality, *darshan* is one possible way of seeing that is open to South Asian museum visitors; images of Hindu gods/goddess can be approached by the 'communities of response' (Davis 1997:9) with the intention to have *darshan*.¹⁹ *Darshan* is a highly appealing visual frame that can be applied to the museum, since it allows comparison with the 'temple effect' of Western museums and enables co-existence of the cultic and exhibition values of objects (Benjamin 1999). However, taking such an approach would prevent formulation of a more generalised notion of South Asian visual consumption that is not restricted by overt religious affiliation, although this limitation does not necessarily mean that the concept of *darshan* is redundant for us here. In relation to the Lahore Museum, it is true that visitors would not state that they perform *darshan*²⁰ as a religious visual practice at the museum, primarily for the practical reason that very few visitors are Hindus. However, if *darshan* is removed from a strictly religious subtext, it actually becomes a good starting point to discuss the attributes of South Asian visuality that the mass museum audiences of the region embrace, as well as allowing revelation of some similarities between *darshan* and other forms of vision that desire reciprocity and sensual response beyond retinal stimulation.

Eck's (1981) investigation of *darshan*, although confined to Hinduism, at times is suggestive of more profane applications when she mentions the 'value' of having *darshan* of holy persons, pilgrimage sites, and deified political figures,²¹ which reflects a popular aspect of South Asian culture that is equally evident in Pakistan—although at times it is referred to as un-Islamic. What I am trying to extrapolate from *darshan* is the fact that everyday vision in South Asia encapsulates more than just the act of disembodied looking; as Eck remarks for *darshan*: '[It is an] . . . imaginative and constructive activity, an act of making. It is not simply the reception of images on the retina' (1981:19). Seeing, then, is a form of 'touching' and 'knowing.'²² It is these elements of vision and polyscopic visual practices that I hope to elucidate as the interpretative frames that visitors bring with them to museums in South Asia.

Critically evaluating Eck's meditation on *darshan*, Sylvian Pinard (1991) adds to it by linking *darshan* to other senses such as taste, which he extends to the remit of Indian arts/aesthetics—verbal or visual—and their aim to produce and communicate the Vedic notion of *rasa*, which he clarifies by quoting Sudhir Kakar's explanation:

Rasa consists first in the creation of one of the eight emotional states—love, laughter, sorrow, anger, high spirits, fear, disgust and astonishment—in the theme or subject of a work of art. Second, it implies the evocation of the same emotional state in the spectator, listener or reader. And finally, it summons the complete mutual absorption of the audience and the artist in the emotional state that has been so created.²³

The parallels between *darshan* as a visual modality and the form of cultural production/spectatorship elaborated by Kakar are clearly striking in the emphasis on mutuality, absorption, and unity between object and audience. Another context in which this darshanic quality was essential is that of the Mughal courtly culture, for which Sandra Freitag (1989) exposes the central role of vision in delineating hierarchy of power and patronage through performances,²⁴ which relied on the counterpart audience and performers to return the obligatory gaze and so endow value, efficacy, and integration. This enduring mutuality of vision between subject/object in South Asia, it seems, has never been concerned with just looking but has always sought in many arenas to stimulate other senses and emotions, thus uniting vision with the somatic while concurrently diminishing the distance between the subject and object. Equally, the position of being an audience member or viewer is not neutral, since there is the expectation to be attracted and drawn in by an object or representation, and become visually interlocked, thereby leading to feelings of knowing, proximity, and other emotional responses.

The act of viewing in South Asia within sacred, profane, political, or artistic realms clearly cannot be said to be incongruent; instead these realms rely on a fluid visual field in which the gaze migrates from one arena to another while maintaining a unity through a grammar based on the expectation of embodied experience and pleasure. Whether sacred or profane, visuality anticipates negotiation and interaction between the viewer and the object without reification of one over the other and demands an experience that will elicit emotive responses and affirmation of previous knowledge. If this is applied to the consumption of museum displays that visitors simply state they have come to ‘watch,’ then within this larger context ‘just watching’ (*dekhna*) refers to much more than just looking. However, the significance of the visual in South Asia should not be simply approached only as a sensory predilection for viewing but understood as a social practice bound up with specific notions of viewing. Visual representation and reception do not operate outside sociopolitical or cultural realms but are caught up as one expression of these realms (Bhatti and Pinney 2011), as Vishvajit Pandya (1998) notes for viewing of *Kachchhe* art and architecture in Gujarat, which is intimately tied up with establishing social interaction and preservation of the *Kachchhe* worldview ideology.²⁵

Nazar

The act of viewing is not conceptually limited to practices coming under the auspices of *darshan* or *dekhna*, which render significant the anticipation of a fixated intense moment of seeing or revelation of an object, and in turn helps accrue meaning for both subject and object. Within the ‘polyscopic’ (Taylor 2002:297) modes of visuality there is the highly pervasive notion of *nazar*, which at one level can be translated as vision and on another level highlights the fact that this vision is not neutral, not in a politicised sense—in South Asia *nazar* pertains to ‘good’ and ‘evil’ vision. Examining the latter notion first, we notice that *nazar* is used by some people as suggestive of having a distinctly negative way of looking—*nazar lagana*, which must be averted. *Nazar* has attributes that present a reverse scenario of the darshanic absorptive qualities, whose reception and reciprocation are actively avoided, since *nazar* is suspected to be one of the most common factors causing minor ailments, failure in a business or social venture, bad luck, and general decline. In Lahore, individuals often discuss who might be the culprit speculating that it was such and such, because *usski nazar toh hai bhi bahut burri* (‘his/her way of looking is very bad’), and so it is worth briefly investigating how people try to combat this forceful visual element physically and socially.

When one is attempting to translate *nazar*, the most obvious association is the evil-eye syndrome in the West; however, there are specific South Asian remedies to combat and remove evil eye (*nazar utharna*). In Lahore, people are always fearful of being caught by the evil eye (*nazar lagjani*), so some place a small dot of black antimony behind their ears, wear black bangles (popular for young children), or tie a black rag on cars to act as a barrier. Often when someone makes an effort with his or her appearance for a social occasion, he or she is told by a family member *nazar say bachna* ('keep safe from *nazar*'), indicating that an element of risk is attached to *nazar*. This fear, though palpable, is resignedly one that cannot be wholly avoided, and so prevention is sought at many levels. One common antidote is known as *mircha warna*, whereby dried red chillies are rotated clockwise around the afflicted person's body circumference seven times, then once counterclockwise, and then passed between the rotator's legs, after which the chillies are burned. The potency of the subsequent flames and smoke provide evidence for the strength of *nazar* and its removal.²⁶ The ubiquity within South Asian society of *nazar* embodiment or transference of the negative effects following visual interaction was also noted by many British colonialists, who reported observations of this popular and enduring local vision and accompanying countermeasures.

The *Punjab Notes and Queries* was a monthly periodical founded and edited by Richard Carnac Temple from 1883 to 1887, with the stated mission of being 'devoted to the systematic collection of authentic notes and scraps of information regarding the country and the people,'²⁷ and information on the practices and beliefs surrounding *nazar* in Punjab was frequently published in the Folklore Section. In the first issue of 1883, Denzil Ibbetson wrote a note entitled *Black a protection against evil eye*,²⁸ in which he reports the use of black instead of iron as a form of protection against *nazar*. Ibbetson became aware of this custom in a conversation: 'Sáhib—"Why don't you keep that pretty child's face clean?" Father—"Oh Sáhib! A little black keeps off the evil eye."' ²⁹ Ibbetson's interest in such ethnographic information is no surprise, but on the pages of *Punjab Notes and Queries*, *nazar* became the main focus of contributions by a W. Cockburn, who began with an initial note about defining *nazar*:

The expression 'the evil eye' is perhaps not quite correct as a translation. . . . It is generally accepted by English people to indicate the supposed ill effects on life and property accruing by the intentional gaze of avarice. The word *nazar* is much more comprehensive, and represents ill effects of the gaze of any one, not excepting the most benevolent or affectionately disposed, when that gaze has induced complete satisfaction

in the mind, with the object observed, whether animate or inanimate. Intention is quite left out of the question here.³⁰

In the following two notes Cockburn picks up on ideas of *nazar wattu* ('evil-eye distraction'), including use of black *kajal* ('lamp-black'), since dark colours were 'considered by natives who are fond of gay colours to be the most likely to cause dissatisfaction in the mind of the observers.'³¹ Cockburn explores the interactional dynamics between the viewer and the recipient, who aims to avert fulfilment of the former's visual satisfaction through distraction of the covetous gaze. The creation of visual dissatisfaction by employing 'disgusting' objects was a fatal antidote, Cockburn reports.³² He goes on to list all manner of cures and distraction techniques used by locals to vanquish the effects of *nazar*, such as the burning of chillies (similar to that noted previously), mixed this time with bran, salt, mustard, and eyelashes of the inflicted.³³ Natural distractions were also thought to be effective and included people born with such deformities as double thumbs, as well as bald men.³⁴ Altering one's appearance also helped, such as by tying an old rag to the left arm, or, if a suspicious look was detected, by pretending 'to limp or contort his visage and spasmodically grasp his elbow or ankle as though he were in pain,'³⁵ thereby distracting unwarranted attention. Less theatrical, but more elegant, was carrying a gaudy handkerchief. As Cockburn writes: 'My sub-assistant, a-Jadon-Thakár, showed me one with a broad red border, and black checks in the centre, which he informed me was first-rate for this purpose.'³⁶ The cultivation of distraction/dissatisfaction in the viewer is also reported to be the reason for deliberate defects in objects such as spoiling or irregularity of patterns on ornamental clothes³⁷ and misspelling/blotting of words/characters in literature,³⁸ and so not only persons but also objects were suspect to *nazar*.

The performed cures and materialised *nazar wattu* used to deny and avert the very pleasure and efficacy sought by fixated glancing where absorption and affective reaction are most pertinent once again show the potency of South Asian notions of vision and help give a better sense of the 'polyscopic' (Taylor 2002:297). One morning, while making a purchase in a shop in the main bazaar of Delhi Gate in the Walled City of Lahore, I witnessed a man passing from shop to shop, wafting *tuni* ('smoke') into each shop as he passed.³⁹ In his hand he had a utensil composed of three conjoined metal containers—one containing heated coals and the other two grains of some sort, which he sprinkled over the coals to release a dense smoke that infused the air and lingered in the shops for a long time. In return for this ritual, shopkeepers gave him a few rupees. When I asked the man why he was doing this, he simply responded: 'It is good to do this' (*Aeh karna accha haunda ai*). Nothing was said, and

no one demanded to know what was happening, since it was an unstated given that the *tuni* would help avert potential evil eye that might be cast on the goods and business prospects of the shopkeepers.

I have so far evoked *nazar* as a malevolent mode of visuality in South Asian society; however, *nazar* can also be comprehended as a 'poetics of sight' (Taylor 2002:297), involving tactile vision that is congruent with *darshan/dekhna*. Woodman Taylor (*ibid.*), in the context of Indian film, identifies the representation and performance of two types of intense 'penetrating' gazes—one being *drishti*⁴⁰ and the other *nazar*. He historicises the latter as a form of poetical visuality dating to the Persianate court culture of the Mughals, in which articulation of *nazar* in poetic stanza allowed sensual proximity and public proclamation of feelings between individuals that were otherwise forbidden by social mores. This connotation of *nazar* as overcoming cultural boundaries in private/public conduct was adopted by Indian cinema—particularly for the romance genre, wherein the meeting of *nazar* (*nazar milana*), extended beyond penetrating and holding of each other's gazes by the hero and heroine at opportune moments to mark the peak of emotional expression—and it remains so. Both producers⁴¹ and viewers alike understand this interlocking of gazes to depict the onset of flourishing romance and release of emotions so far suppressed by the romantic protagonists that is embellished aurally and symbolically in the lyrics/music of film songs and dance heightening the emotive/bodily quality of *nazar*. This elucidation of polyscopic visualities in South Asia as more than simply looking, in which the viewer seeks to feel, touch, and hold the image through the gaze and other bodily senses, is an enduring quality that has been conceptualised by Chris Pinney (2002a) as a 'corpothetics' of vision.

Corpothetics

The proposition of a tactile vision is all too clear here (*ibid.*); however, what the forms just described of fully engaged vision *darshan/dekhna/nazar* suggest is that there are corporeal reactions and performances around the reception of images. The eyes, then, are a type of instigator that send and receive the gaze and cause the body to feel the object, triggering sensual and emotional responses leading to a corporeal experience, which, in the case of film, sutures the actors on screen to the audience. Visual pleasure resulting from the act of looking, as in *darshan/dekhna/nazar* for viewers in South Asia, is heavily reliant on evincing a visceral response that is anticipated in relation to the consumption of images (or avoided because of evil eye). The association that I make here is that of an embodied vision, based on what Chris Pinney calls 'corpothetics' (2001:157), a concept that does not reify South Asian visuality

but links it with visual practices in other societies—a ‘counterhistory of visibility’ (2002a:359). Pinney (2001a, 2002a) outlines the need to recover the body’s performance as part of aesthetics in relation to visual consumption (*darshan*) of Hindu chromolithographs,⁴² proposing:

the use of the term ‘corporetics’ as opposed to ‘aesthetics’ to describe the practices that surround these images. If ‘aesthetics’ is about the separation between the image and the beholder, and a ‘disinterested’ evaluation of images, ‘corporetics’ entails a desire to fuse image and beholder, and the elevation of efficacy (as, for example, in *barkat*) as the central criterion of value.⁴³

Urging sensitivity toward aesthetic engagements that are social, embodied, and—important to note—aware of the desire to fuse object/subject in image consumption, this timely emphasis on bodily praxis alerts us to the mutuality and unison of the human sensorium that does not seek to isolate one sense—as in the case of the modern gaze, whereby corporeal responses were subdued under a ‘scientific’ discourse ‘that abolishe[d] the “space of contemplation” [and] conceptualized . . . a disembodied cerebral construction of the world as picture’(2002:359); so, analysis and prognosis of museum consumption need to be attentive to this, particularly in South Asia, where experiences of the modern museum are visual as much phenomenological.

Amalgamating the visual with the somatic in image consumption, corporetics advocates reconjoining the cerebral with the body to engender an affective consumption, which in South Asia is highly palpable, since everyday visual regimes function at an intensity that embraces multisensorial experiences. This corporeality is not confined to the use of images in religious devotion but extends to other popular visual spaces and genres, such as film and photography (Pinney 1997), and here to the museum through visitors’ embodied visual responses and ways of seeing—*darshan/dekhnal/nazar*—and interaction with objects. In the museum context, South Asian visual interpretation (Chapter 4) overrides the modern discourse of the Western museum on visual consumption by abolishing the distance between the audience and the museum object promulgated in pedagogic displays/narratives. However, once tropicalised, the museum has had to cope with the visceral needs that constitute visual consumption among the local public in South Asia, who are attracted by the *ajaiib*. This expectation of attraction is natural, since it is catered to in other visual arenas, as Hendley earlier identified, and cannot be superficially replaced or satisfied by distancing institutional pedagogy, at least for those without ‘second sight’ (Prakash 1999:34); rather, the attractive and pedagogical became/are parallel visions. What makes this ocular situation more compelling is the fact that South Asian

visual practices are enduring and operate across visual genres and media in what Appadurai and Breckenridge (1992, 1995) call the 'interocular,' akin to Hendley's (1914) 'museum spirit.'

Interocular

The interocular as espoused by Appadurai and Breckenridge (1995) is the visual equivalent of the inter-textual (Bakhtin 1981) reading/interpretation process that refers to the dialogic nature of viewing and interpretation. This intervisuality textures and directs the public gaze in South Asia with the onset of a particular form of modernity that is characterised by the consumption of new media, enabling the creation of what Appadurai and Breckenridge term 'public culture'⁴⁴ (1995). The mass media in South Asian modernity operate within this interocular, which is envisaged as a network of different visual arenas (global and local) interacting and influencing one another, described as a field 'structured so that each site or setting for the socialising and regulating of the public gaze is to some degree affected by the experience of other sites' (ibid. 1995:12). This visual complex captures the cross-referencing element of seeing, in which the visual field is influenced by migrating genres (narratives, styles, textures, objects)⁴⁵ between media/technologies that are local/transnational and create new contexts/meanings for one another.

This public modernity of India is described by Pinney (2001b) as a zone of cultural debate whose potency and specificity lie in the fact that they elide oppositions of high and low culture and avoid reducing consumption and interpretation to that which is predictably structured/socialised in terms of Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* (Appadurai 1990). Rather, as Pinney identifies for cultural agency in viewing Hindi film, this arena 'connotes a field that far exceeds both conventionally conceptualized "politics" and "culture"' (ibid.:17). The intention behind public culture is to recognise a shared community of consumers/citizens in a zone of contestation where consumption of texts/images/experiences debates identity, nation-state, tradition, and modernity, which to some extent are facilitated by shared historical episteme/grammar or 'vestigial dialects' (Nandy 1995). It is not possible to fully examine the concept of public culture here; however, I wish to highlight the 'cultural agency' (Pinney 2001b:17)⁴⁶ that this concept endows on diverse groups within South Asia to communicate through consumption as a public, signifying not a homogenised entity but one that shares cultural sentiments, expressions, and feelings that cut across boundaries of cultural groups, social class, religion, and even nationality⁴⁷ to create an arena of agency/debate.

Public culture can take many forms: Appadurai and Breckenridge (1995) examine cinema, television, sport spectatorship (mainly cricket),

restaurants, and the museum as presenting interocular themes and images. Of course, I concentrate on museums, and although this inclusion is viable, it is highly questionable for South Asia. Can museums such as the Lahore Museum really be considered places where South Asian citizens reflect/debate national identity and contemporary culture in an objectified way? A disjunction becomes apparent if one reflects on the outcome of the ethnographic material presented in the previous chapter, where visitors failed to consider the museum as constituting their contemporary identity in its many forms.

Rustom Bharucha (2000) provides a brief critical reassessment of Appadurai and Breckenridge's (1992) proposition that South Asian museums are a fully integrated part of this democratised urban space,⁴⁸ stating that their 'non-dialectics of seeing' (2000:13) prevent them from acknowledging the reality and social dynamic surrounding the 'colonial relics' or 'bureaucratic nightmares' (ibid.:12), as Bharucha refers to museums. This reality, as exemplified by the Lahore Museum, is difficult to position wholly as a facet of public culture for two simple and pragmatic reasons: first, the museum envisages its role as one of objectifying specialised knowledge—history, cultural patrimony, antiquity—which overshadow the public's needs; second, visitors are not interested in debating their citizenry or cultural self in the space of the museum. Instead, they want to see attractions that evoke emotions and stimulate their affective imagination. However, museums can be considered part of the interocular public culture through visitors' gaze, which, exposed to and influenced by other media, sites of 'exhibition-cum-sale' (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1992), television, or film, then enters the museum and interacts with exhibits employing similar visual frames, desires, and mode/dynamics of interpretation.

One further issue here is the assumption that the interocular is confined to consumption of modern and transnational visual forms/textures/styles (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988, 1995). In South Asia at least, there are enduring visual and consumption practices/arenas that disrupt and illuminate the 'archaic/modern'⁴⁹ (Pinney 1998) juxtaposition. The transformation of old ways of seeing into new 'spectacularised' forms of visibility should not be so hastily presumed. As Bharucha notes, the 'back and forth temporalities of seeing Indian artefacts, both within and outside the boundaries of the museum' (2000:13–14) affect visual consumption, making it ambiguous in terms of modern/traditional practices. This fluidity is augmented by the acknowledgment that culture and history—performative and visual—cannot be chronologised into an evolutionary timeline in South Asia, since they are repetitive and recursive practices and idioms. Visual consumption within the museum therefore resists singular appropriations as South Asian culture, which internally

retains a core of enduring cultural practices/meanings and is externally continuously mutating and evolving as part of its modernity to create 'surreal juxtapositions' (Classen 1996:52) that need to be recognised by public culture.⁵⁰

These archaic and modern public visualisations socialise both the visitors' gaze and the museum, as Hendley (1914) recognised when he emphasised understanding local forms of visibility and their centrality to the success of museums in colonial India. Attempts to comprehend what museum visitors really see and experience when they stand in front of objects must contend with a visibility that is archaic yet flexible enough to incorporate new visions. As Bharucha states for South Asia: 'What we need is not a new museumisation of museum, but a new socialisation of its radical possibilities' (2000:19). It is now time to contextualise the museum as part of the larger visualscape and its consumption beyond the museum's four walls; only then can a greater insight be had into the particular meanings that are constructed in the museum space.⁵¹ Museums need to be examined as part of this wider visual arena. As Michael Ames recognises: 'Cultural work gets done not only in the established heritage institutions but also in the more popular "museums" of everyday life such as department stores, marketplaces, shopping malls and fairs' (1992:112). This approach allows the stuffy and introverted museum institution to open up to new meanings and cultural agency, simultaneously breaking down the monopoly and dominance of the Western museum model. The myriad and multilayered practice, meaning and experience of South Asian visibility, is not only a cultural force but gives life to the museum in the South Asian context, as Sandria Freitag comments: '[In] this "increased priority of the visual register" (Friedberg 1993:16) . . . participants in South Asian civil society are presented with more flexibility, not less; with more capacity to shape and influence the values presented and interpretations constructed' (2001:67).

'MUSEUMS OF EVERYDAY LIFE'⁵²

When I enquired among visitors to the Lahore Museum if they had encountered any of the objects on display in other cultural arenas, most responses alluded to the museum as an object-based *aide-mémoire*. Conferring interocular connections, visitors stated that they had seen similar (*milthay-jhulthay*) pottery, utensils, and craft objects such as embroidered shawls and jewellery in their own villages, where such objects were still being made and used.⁵³ Qudsia, a 42-year-old housewife originally from Kohat but now living in Gari-Shah, Lahore, remarked: 'Jewellery and the wooden doors and the embroidered shawls, we have those in our village. Actually, the woodwork on the doors in our old houses has

better designs and is more beautiful than those here!’⁵⁴ Others, including Mrs. Mujahid from Bhati Gate, Lahore, commented on the return of the antique look as ethnic chic, available widely in local bazaars and boutique/art galleries: ‘I have seen things like this in the Fort. . . . In the bazaars, too, you can get utensils like those shown here, as they are being made in this old style again. It is coming back into fashion!’⁵⁵ Some stated they had seen similar Quranic manuscripts at the Badshahi Mosque and Fort museums in Lahore, and *bhut* in the Taxila Museum or in television documentaries.

However, this literal interocularity of the museum does little to reveal what I have outlined as a South Asian visibility associated with embodied interpretation beyond linguistic expression. I elucidate this visual consumption as a leap of affective imagination between visual genres and spaces through which desire for an object is related, such as the way Saima Taufail likened her museum experience to that of watching an old film.⁵⁶ The question that remains unanswered is what constitutes the Lahore Museum’s interocularity that influences visitors’ experience and encourages them to seek the curious and *ajab*. The visual field that I expound here renders the museum as one visual form in the metropolitan visualscape of Lahore that traverses modern and traditional images/technologies/places. Fortunately, rather than haphazardly exploring visual forms that present a museum spirit, one can complement everyday visual consumption (film, television) with that falling into the categories of commercial (bazaars) and popular (attendance of saints’ shrines)—many visitors stated they regularly incorporate such activities with their museum visitation.⁵⁷ (Out-of-town visitors usually embark on a route that takes in several places in Lahore City, whereas Lahoris might visit only one or two other places in conjunction to their museum visit.)

Let us now examine some of the other visual sites that potentially inflect the Lahore Museum experience.

The Everyday: Television

The great impact of electronic media such as television and film in the domestic space became apparent to me while visiting a neighbour in Lahore.⁵⁸ With a resigned tone of voice, Samina, a 50-year-old housewife connected her eldest son’s recent migration to the United States of America directly with the tenacity of images shown in programmes. Handing me the mandatory soft drink, she remarked how people are influenced by the ‘pictures’ they see in films and on television: ‘[Images] stick in one’s mind, and even when we stand to pray they are in front of us, in our eyes! They are so strong.’ This gripping quality of images, for people like Samina, emphasises the attraction of visual representation as

well as of culturally informed interaction/aspiration. So, what kind of images are desired, and how are they being consumed within the home through the technology of television and its associated 'cultural invasion from the skies' (Brosius and Butcher 1999:14) satellite television?

Television was introduced in Pakistan on November 26, 1964,⁵⁹ under the state-run venture of Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PTV), which over the years has projected state policy and cultural integration in programmes covering themes of social order, religion, morality, civic and national responsibility, agricultural reforms, and development.⁶⁰ Entertainment on PTV has largely consisted of Pakistani soap operas (*dramay*), which are extremely popular for their social realist genre, although recently there has been a challenge from Indian *dramay* with the onset of cable. Saira Sajid of Defence lamented that with the subsequent increase in channel variety the realist quality has suffered over the last decade: 'Before, we had good *dramay* like *Ankahi* ["Unspoken"] that showed our real life; now . . . the *dramay* we have just show glamour, and they show Dubai and such places . . . Of course, it is good to see these places, but there are no storylines anymore.'⁶¹

The shift in pleasure and genre of recent Pakistani *dramay* such as *Mehndi* ('Henna')⁶² is tied up with the intrigue for viewing glamour and signs of conspicuous consumption, as well as a curiosity for representations of modernity among the middle-classes (Dwyer 2000). This trend of portraying upper-middle-class lifestyles in Pakistani *dramay* has followed similar projections in the highly popular Indian *dramay*, which are consumed with vivacious enthusiasm by a wide range of audiences from lower to elite classes. Visual consumption here does not necessarily have the intention to directly emulate or own these signs; rather, it is an aspirational social mobility centred on intense visual engagement and awareness of the signification. However, the allure of images representing evolving modernity—usually urban South Asia or Western metropolis⁶³—do not betray traditional values; rather, the two cultural predicaments are negotiated as part of a 'cubist' society (McGill Murphy 1996). As Ayesha Ashfaq stated: 'Recently I enjoyed watching *Mehndi*. . . . It really attracted me, because despite the look and women being very modern, they dealt with issues that affect all our society . . . our culture and showed us that despite the modern way of life we have similar issues of dowry, money.'⁶⁴

The arrival of satellite television has increased the spectrum of images available for immediate consumption and likewise broken the monopoly of state television in Pakistani homes by beaming in global images from around the world. However, it is not strictly satellite that has enabled this proliferation but local cable networks that have democratised satellite television by making it accessible to the majority.⁶⁵ Pakistani viewers

have an immense choice that is dominated by foreign channels,⁶⁶ and only recently have private Pakistani satellite channels been inaugurated, such as GEO, Indus, and ARY Digital. These channels complement the predominant viewing of Indian media that have an immediate cultural resonance, and despite paradoxically being ‘foreign’ they are recognised as constituting ‘our’ culture.⁶⁷ The visual allure of and preference for Indian channels such as Zee TV and Star Plus also lie in terms of higher quality and better entertainment. As Tanveer Akhtar remarked:

After commercialisation [of television], the drama is no longer a drama; they are advertisements, and there is harm in admitting this, but the Indians have a hold on our media, as they are very strong here . . . a person wants to watch television for relaxation. . . . But on Pakistani channels, all you get is Musharaf *sahib* . . . all the time . . . so no one wants to watch PTV; they will watch Star Plus . . . we mostly watch Star Plus.⁶⁸

The attraction of Indian channels is sometimes tinged with anxiety about the hold that Indian images have on the Pakistani audience, as alluded to by Tanveer Akhtar. However, this hold is momentary and not perceived by the public as a wholesale cultural onslaught from across the border, as purported by Akbar Ahmed (1997). The translation of political hostility into cultural aggression via media does not manifest itself, because it is easily overridden by shared culture, traditions, values (North Indian),⁶⁹ and language⁷⁰ that inform consumption. Saima Taufail commented that, since they got cable, all they watch is Indian channels: ‘We don’t even want to watch the Pakistani channels. I am not sure what it is, whether the cable is pulling us towards it and we are attracted by it more.’⁷¹ The projection of a pan-Indian, middle-class identity/lifestyle does not cause Pakistani viewers anxiety; instead, they delight in avidly watching ‘our’ culture—subverting the ideological separation of cultures between India and Pakistan and their burgeoning middle classes,⁷² who share similar visual practices and metropolitan aspirations and possibilities (Pinney 2001b).

A popular Indian channel is Star Plus, which broadcasts *dramay* such as *Yeh Rishta kya Kehlata hai?* (*What Is This Relationship Called?*), *Sapna Babul ka: Bidaai* (*A Father’s Dream: Bridal Send-Off*), and *Behenein* (*Sisters*). Repeatedly I was told how people could not miss an episode, with the longevity of such *dramay*, some lasting for years, making them compulsive daily viewing and forming a discursive space where viewers discuss plots and character relationships with family members and friends in a subjective self-constructive manner.⁷³ Adeeba Kramat, a housewife from Bilal Ganj whose favourite channel was Star Plus, told me: ‘You get to see a family situation and their relationships along with traditions and our own way of life . . . you also see the latest fashion,

and their houses are so well decorated, it is all so modern. I like to look at all these things.⁷⁴ In terms of visual consumption, alongside the social identification, there is a curious pleasure in viewing spectacular signs of wealth and modernity that supplement traditional values. Most *dramay* scenarios, like those just mentioned, revolve around the melodrama of a family who lives in an ornately decorated luxurious home that includes a *puja* room, owns several cars, and travels abroad; the women dress lavishly in silks and gold or Western attire, creating an environment of balancing a modern lifestyle without forgetting religious/cultural traditions, morals, and sentiments. This personal association with and curiosity about an upper middle-class lifestyle identified with modernity guides consumption of images popularised in the form of *dramay*—Pakistani and Indian—and is interchangeable with, and viewed alongside, the equally pervasive Hindi cinema.⁷⁵

The Imaginary: Cinema

Cable television has increased the frequency and ease with which Indian films can be viewed by a Pakistani audience, making these films accessible directly from various Indian channels, as well as on request from the local cable operator.⁷⁶ In addition, Indian films are openly available as pirated DVD copies that can be hired or purchased in any bazaar,⁷⁷ bypassing the ban that until recently was in place (since 1965) on the viewing of Indian films within Pakistan.⁷⁸ It is impossible to imagine the domestic and public landscape of Lahore without the presence of Indian films and related paraphernalia—music, posters, design names for jewellery, and so on.⁷⁹ Although there is a Pakistani film industry based in Lahore (Lollywood),⁸⁰ which produces Urdu and Punjabi films, it does not compare in popularity to Indian films. Pakistani cinema fails to interest the average citizen; as Tanveer Akhtar commented: 'I like Indian films. *Bollywood* is only second to Hollywood, and Pakistani films are just a headache. It is not our culture that is shown in Punjabi films.'⁸¹ The partiality for Indian films is a reflection of the viewer's discernment for visual quality and narrative structure, as well as the anticipation of visual pleasure and realism, which made the choice simple for Saima Taufail: 'In Indian films you actually feel there is a reality; they show it as if it is the truth. . . . [Indian films] feel real . . . like Shah Rukh in *Devdas*, you get lost in it, and they touch you inside.'⁸² This feeling of realism was commented on by many people; first of all, literally as interpellation with the protagonists, giving a sense of emotional proximity whereby a mutual space is inhabited and the reality of the filmic space becomes their own, which Shahida Afzal described as a sense of *apnapan* ['our own']—'the films don't feel distant, you feel part of it.'⁸³ Second, realism

also refers to a type of visual resonance, which perhaps should be more appropriately understood as a type of ‘magical realism’ (Pinney 1998), with viewers taking delight in seeing images of idyllic landscapes, grand buildings, modern cityscapes, and foreign locales—vistas that ignite the imagination.

If by magical realism, we mean representation that combines reality/imaginary and modern/traditional—visually and culturally—then this juxtaposition alerts us to one form of visual imagery that is desired in film consumption: the scenic, often forming the background for song sequences shot usually in a foreign or grand location, as well as heritage sites like the Taj Mahal. Ilyas Anjum especially enjoyed this facet of Indian films as a source of ocular exploration; for him watching films was ‘like actually travelling and visiting that place, we get to see the UK’s roads and buildings [as] it is beyond my means to go to UK and America, so I fulfil my desire through films.’⁸⁴ This visual appropriation and imagining of the modern or Other space that can be visited through film is highly attractive; as Shahida Afzal pointed out: ‘films teach us a lot about our culture and current changes . . . also, the settings are great, these places they go to are so spectacular and beautiful. . . . I have always wanted to see India, Gujarat, and London, and we get to see all these places. It is enjoyable!’⁸⁵ Watching Indian films is not just escapism for the viewer but also an invitation for viewers to be part of what Ashis Nandy calls ‘a shared space of debate’ (1998), in which predicaments regarding culture, modernity, and the nation⁸⁶ can be discussed through the visual narrative encompassing other spaces/times that are a type of dreamscape. Although space does not permit me to illustrate the various visual genres of Indian film⁸⁷ and their relative appropriations, I exemplify with analysis of two films that were popular during my time in Lahore *Devdas* (2002) and *Chalte Chalte* (2003).

Devdas is a story that has been retold by Hindi cinema several times, with the most recent version by Sanjay Leela Bhansali (2002) living up to its epic status.⁸⁸ The basic plot centres on the love story of Devdas Mukherjee (Shah Rukh Khan) and his childhood sweetheart Parvati/Paro (Aishwarya Rai), whose plans for marriage after Devdas’s return from a city education⁸⁹ are thwarted by issues of differing status of the families, leaving Paro’s fate to be marriage to the widowed *Thakur*. Devastated by the course of events, Devdas turns to alcohol and encounters a courtesan—Chandramukhi (Madhuri Dixit)—who devotes herself to looking after Devdas until he eventually dies outside the gates of Paro’s mansion. Although the tragedy/romance of the narrative is well known to most viewers, their emotional reaction and fascination are heightened by the spectacular locations, costumes, music, and sets that enhance the magical-realism. In contrast, *Chalte Chalte* (‘Along the

Way') is a modern-day story based on the opposites-attract formula. The film is set in Greece and India, where a chance accident between the truck of Raj Mathur (Shah Rukh Khan) and the car of Priya Chopra (Rani Mukherjee) leads to romance between the two. Priya, engaged to Sameer—the son of a close family friend in Greece—has to choose between someone of a similar cultural background or her soul mate, Raj, who wagers all his assets to travel to Greece so he can express his feelings to her. Priya chooses to marry Raj and adjust to the role of a normal middle-class Indian housewife. However, difficulties ensue at a time when Raj's business problems are affecting their relationship, and they separate; the rest of the story focuses on their reconciliation, which symbolically represents issues of class, values, and lifestyles.

The popularity of both these films was noticeable during my research when they were constantly aired on cable, and although disparate in terms of one being historically situated and the other located in contemporary India/Greece, viewers saw similarities in the attempts to support or resolve clashes in cultural values, traditions, and modernity in two differing predicaments. For our purposes here, these films were also appreciated for their spectacular scenic content, which attracted viewers who were captivated by the depiction of the past—early twentieth century in *Devdas*—or the foreign location in *Chalte Chalte*—Greece. *Devdas* presented to the viewer an opulent past on an epic scale, with lavish film sets showing large *havelis*, a colourful world of courtesans, the affluent trappings of upper-class Bengali lifestyle, and elaborate celebration of festivals and traditions that connected the viewer with the past as history and to the present as representations of repetitive/enduring cultural practices and performances that persist and take place in viewers' real life, such as marriage ceremonies and religious festivals. Coupled with this sense of familiarity are the visual curiosity about and the enthusiasm for the new,⁹⁰ which are not wholly decipherable, and hence the viewer is made to wonder and debate—such as in *Chalte Chalte*, where the new landscapes of Greece and modern Mumbai are consumed alongside known parts of India. The scenic beauty of Greece and the modern cityscape of Mumbai complement each other in representing for the viewer not only beautiful land-/city-scapes but also signs of nature's fecundity and the city's prosperity,⁹¹ in which they can let their vision roam—not simply to know or see realism but to explore and experience imagined places. This visual interaction is similar to the audience imaginings described by Arjun Appadurai (1996:299):

The lines between 'realistic' and the fictional landscapes are blurred, so that the farther away these audiences are from the direct experiences of metropolitan life, the more likely they are to construct 'imagined worlds'

which are chimerical, aesthetic, even fantastic objects, particularly if assessed by the criteria of some other perspective, some other ‘imagined world.’

The attraction of consuming film images lies precisely in the images’ chimerical and fantastic attributes, which impress the viewer’s gaze in an affective way similar to darshanic visual practices by fixating it and returning the gaze with stimulating imagined worlds. This visual impulse feeds the expectation to be invited into a relationship with the image, whereby the viewer is fascinated and inquisitive about what is presented, while evincing physical pleasure commonly described as ‘pleasing to the heart and eyes.’ However, this is not to say that consumption of films does not aid in learning; films can provide visual knowledge or points of reference for understanding other objects. Ejaz Ali one day demonstrated this fact when talking about objects from great civilisations displayed in the Lahore Museum. Expressing his deep fascination for all the wonders left behind by the Greeks and Egyptians, he happened to mention Raja Inder’s Palace,⁹² which apparently had a chessboard with animals and humans as chess pieces. In describing this palace, Ejaz Ali aptly compared it to the scenes from *Devdas*: ‘It was like the *mahals* [“palaces”] you see in *Devdas* . . . films like that show how it really used to be, you can see it all and learn from it, just like in documentaries.’⁹³ Indian films are thus one source for viewers to gain information from in order to debate culture and evolving modernity around them, as one visitor in an interocular manner claimed: he knew everything there was to know about the Gandhara Gallery, because he had seen it all in the film *Asoka*.⁹⁴ The consumption of films enables the Lahore Museum’s visitors to transgress object meanings beyond their exhibitionary setting and experience them in relation to the filmic imagination. However, this form of visual expansiveness is not limited to media; other arenas are equally influential.

The Novel: Bazaars

The interocularity (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1992, 1995) of migrating images, textures, and genres now brings us to the visual arena of the bazaar, which can be conveniently approached by remaining with *Devdas* for a little while longer. Indian films have an inescapable visual presence in the commercial space of Lahore’s bazaars, where film stars gaze at shoppers from shop signs, packaging, T-shirts, and posters; however, films are also appropriated in a more physical manner as material goods to adorn the body and indulge in the fantasy. The release of *Devdas*⁹⁵ was accompanied in Lahore by an array of commodities said to be ‘from’ *Devdas*—cloth-patterns, earrings, bangles, and types of embroidery—which women and girls of all classes appropriated by

viewing, handling, and purchasing. These material offshoots of the film transformed the historical genre into a popular style displayed in the bazaar as new and sensuous contemporary commodities that arrested the vision and spurred on intentions promulgating an emotive desire to embody the *Devdas* look.

The key element to be explored here is how fantasy and attraction are performed in the display and revelation of commodities for consumers frequenting the bazaars of Lahore—commodities that present another visual interface of exhibition and ‘museum spirit’ (Hendley 1914:39) beyond the museum.⁹⁶ The connection between commercialism and museum exhibitionism is not new; Neil Harris (1990) identifies the coterminous evolution and contestation of display techniques of museums, fairs, and department stores in mid-nineteenth-century United States of America. The pivotal visual link among these arenas is of ‘merchandizing,’ or forms of commodity display, which influenced and guided public taste while simultaneously presenting ‘fantasies of luxury’ through ‘sensuous materiality’ (Harris 1990:64–66) that stirred the customer/viewer’s imagination. The centrality of imagination and bodily experience of opulent displays are also forcefully demonstrated in Rosalind Williams’s evocation of modern France’s *Dream Worlds* (1989) with the onset of mass consumption. Both Harris (1990) and Williams (1989) pay attention to the visual seduction of exhibition/fair/exposition displays in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which paralleled the department store through the commercial experience and its sheer novelty and variety of exotic objects on display. Consumers were invited, if not to purchase or learn, then at least to view and share in the pleasure of commodity fantasy. Williams comments: ‘Sensual pleasures of consumption triumphed over the abstract intellectual enjoyment of contemplating the progress of knowledge’ (ibid.:59–60). The contemporary bazaars⁹⁷ of Lahore remain vibrant spaces/places where displays of commoditised goods offer visual pleasure reminiscent of Williams’s observations for French department stores, in which ‘consumers are an audience to be entertained by commodities, where selling is mingled with amusement, where arousal of free-floating desire is as important as immediate purchase of particular items’ (ibid.:67). So, what is the nature of interaction in the commodity performances/exhibitionism in the bazaars of Lahore, and how do they entice and attract the customer/viewer?

When one thinks of a bazaar, the immediate image conjured is usually characterised by a maze of narrow alleyways of densely packed small shops whose wares spill out onto the path, with vendors perched on the threshold guarding their goods, eyeing potential customers or idly watching the flow of commodities and people passing by. This generic description of a bazaar, like bazaars recreated at European exhibitions

of the nineteenth century onward,⁹⁸ although premised on an orientalist aesthetic, applies to the ubiquitous bazaars in the Walled City of Lahore.

The older parts of Lahore and its overspill contain many such bazaars, each with its own identity and specialist commodity on offer and each of which can be neatly classified into a type with which the public are well acquainted; for example, *Suha Bazaar* is associated with gold, *Akbari Mandi* sells all manner of spices, *Kasera Bazaar* is known for steel cooking utensils, and *Ghoomti Bazaar* vends all manner of textiles.

The bazaar most often frequented by the Lahore Museum's visitors in conjunction with their visit is Anarkali,⁹⁹ partly because of proximity¹⁰⁰ but also its reputation for selling a variety of goods and services at a reasonable price, from clothing/accessories to luggage, kitchen utensils, cloth dyeing, and refreshments. Part of this bazaar is modern, with small arcades of shops that give way to parts that resemble the traditional bazaar set-up of small shops in narrow *gallian* ('alleyways'). Most of the shops are densely packed with goods covering the entire wall space that under intense lighting bedazzle the passing customers, who are invited to take audience on small wooden benches in front of the shops and observe the revelation of goods by vendors. This performative spectacle of the bazaar is essential in satisfying the audience's visual/bodily desire for and imagination of commodity consumption that involves the subject interacting, feeling, and ultimately being persuaded to purchase. In comparing the difference between a department store—Pace—and the bazaar, Ilyas Anjum opined: 'In the old bazaars you can bargain and you can touch things in the shops; in Pace you want to but fear touching them . . . although I do enjoy looking at things [in Pace], as they are clearly displayed.'¹⁰¹

The visual interface of the bazaar is such that it requires the customer to be enticed initially by the sales pitch, which specifically targets the customer's gaze, proclaiming *Dekhnay ka toh kahi paisay nahi!* ('There is no charge for looking!') or *Aap bas aah kar aik nazar dekh leejyay, layhna zaroori nahi hai!* ('Please come and at least have one look, there is no need to buy!'). Likewise, the customer has expectations to be enchanted and overwhelmed by the performance enacted in front of him or her; entering the claustrophobic space of the bazaar shop, the customer perceives the feeling of visual excess and hyperactivity, which borders on disorder, leaving the gaze unable to settle on any single item. The customer's distracted gaze has to be focused, and so with high-voltage bulbs flicked on, the whole shop, no matter how small, comes alive with objects doused in bright illumination. Once an interest point has been established, the static display of objects is activated into a flurry of revelation and exhibition of goods. Any object, be it cloth or utensil, is slowly exposed in a successive display process that is anticipated by the

customer, who hopes to see the full variety of form/style and eventually the best, latest, and ultimately the unique piece, which the shopkeepers hold back on purpose. This ongoing displaying/draping of goods is a strategy that attracts and invites viewers to handle and feel objects in order to assess whether the sales banter is trustworthy. As Shahida Afzal stated: 'I have to touch the things. Until then I can't be sure if it is worth the price . . . or even if it is real.'¹⁰² To a certain extent, this commodity revelation represents a corpothetic spectacle that combines visual display with a sensory affectivity and delight that allow imagination/discourse around the object with a view to ownership.

This bazaar exhibitionism of goods from behind glass cases and shelves provokes imaginings and interpretations around ideas of luxury and uniqueness driven by a curiosity to see the wondrous and the new, which are distinguished by classification of imported versus local.¹⁰³ Shopkeepers, acutely aware of this desire, highlight qualities that emphasise the latter often exclaiming: *Meray pass aik nayi cheese hai, abbi aiyi hai, yuneeek hai, dekhlay aap!* ('I have something very new, it has just arrived, is unique, have a look!'). This dichotomy of objects implicitly links prestige, superiority, and modernity to the imported (unknown) in opposition to the local (known). However, interspersed between these poles is a whole sphere of *jailee* ('illegal') copies, or attempts at disguising Pakistani goods as foreign brands by innocuously placing labels stating 'Made in Japan' or 'China',¹⁰⁴ all promising a lifestyle that is attainable through accretion of material signs representing modernity and progress. As Saima Taufail related: 'People do tell you that they are wearing imported things and think [of] themselves as modern.'¹⁰⁵ Bazaar exhibitionism is successful precisely because it evinces in the consumer emotions ensuing from the gripping spectacle and displays, which Williams articulates well: 'The purpose of the materials is not to express their own character but to convey a sense of the lavish and foreign . . . not to express internal consistency but to bring together anything that expresses distance from the ordinary' (1989:71).

This craze, as Tanveer Akhtar called it,¹⁰⁶ for imported objects can be thought of as an interocular adjunct to the pleasure taken in seeing foreign images in Indian films or *dramay*, since both attract through new visions and modern experiences. As Takreem Fatima claimed: 'We are impressed by foreign things. . . . If there is a Pakistani product with a hundred percent guarantee to work and then one with a doubtful-looking label saying "UK," we will blindly choose that, as we are impressed by it . . . confused by it.'¹⁰⁷ Other media/imagery, then, influence consumer preference for the novelties on show in the bazaar in a manner similar to Neil Harris's description of 1930s fairs that 'reflected a world in which the new was worshipped and the emphasis on sensation

and novel perceptions rather than the absorption of data. Prepared for novel experience by motion pictures and national advertising, the public moved through these fairs in a less reverent and more aggressive fashion than had their nineteenth-century ancestors' (1990:68).

Unlike the situations described by Harris (1990) and Williams (1989), in Lahore the seductive objectified visions are not confined to the department store; instead, the bazaars offer juxtapositions that confer a duality of old-style displays intermingled with revelation of the novel and modern. This is not to say that department stores do not exist in Lahore; new shopping plazas are constantly being constructed. Yet, as Ilyas Anjum pointed out, visual interaction at the new stores does not lead to an enjoyable sensory appropriation.¹⁰⁸ Instead, department stores such as Pace are for many a curiosity and a venue for recreational activity that enables viewers/customers to transitionally inhabit an icon of modernity, where even the experience of an escalator is intriguing.¹⁰⁹ These novel perceptions and pleasures of the commercial world must not be taken as distinct from or replacing other enduring visual arenas that are pervasive in the fabric of Lahore society but as mingling with and relying on archaic visual perceptions and emotions that are evidenced at saints' shrines and *mela*.

The Enduring: Saints' Shrines

Mela ('fair') is an annual feature of saints' shrines (*mazaar*) that marks the celebration of the respective saint's *urs* ('death anniversary'),¹¹⁰ drawing large numbers of disciples (*murid*) and faithful (*akidatmand*) to pay homage and enjoy the festivities as well as other recreational sites, such as the Lahore Museum. During the colonial period, the Lahore Museum benefited from *mela* days, because they dramatically increased visitor numbers (Chapter 4). One such *mela* was *Chiragon ka Mela*, which occurred in the Shalimar area of Lahore; this *mela* still takes place and is one of many throughout the year,¹¹¹ with the largest accompanying the *urs* of Data Ganj Baksh (*Data Sahib*).¹¹² However, *mela* and *urs* are not the only times when people visit shrines, so I wish to concentrate on the commonplace attendance at the shrine of *Data Sahib*, which some visitors call at before or after the Lahore Museum.¹¹³ It would be wrong to suggest that there is any major disparity between the mundane appropriation of shrines and that of *mela/urs* days, when the only difference is the sense of heightened spirituality and festivity during the latter.

Data Sahib is officially recognised as Lahore's patron saint with a public holiday granted on the *urs*. Respect for the saint is strengthened by stories recounting the miracles taking place at the shrine¹¹⁴ or the saint's benevolence on the city. As Takreem Fatima recounted: 'It is said that floods have come and earthquakes, but they have never affected

Lahore . . . it has always been safeguarded . . . because of *Data Sahib*. There is also the spirituality, and people have faith that when they say a prayer there, it will definitely be answered.¹¹⁵ This reverence for *Data Sahib* is demonstrated by the constant flow of people leaving and entering the shrine complex day and night on Ravi Road, with those not having enough time to go in paying their respects from afar by bowing their head, fixing their gaze onto the shrine, and praying as they walk or drive past. Apart from *urs* days, the rush around the shrine of *Data Sahib* is most palpable on Thursdays, which is *piron ka din* ('saints' day') and considered auspicious for visiting saints' shrines. The desire to benefit propitiously from *Data Sahib* is not limited to a specific class or sector of society and extends from a newly married couple to the political sphere (*sayasat*). There are regular visits by members of the National Assembly and by prime ministers soon after coming into office.¹¹⁶

Belief in *Data Sahib* as a bountiful force/vision attracts devotees who envision the saint as a holy 'middle man.' As Saima Taufail explained: 'People go there, as they see the saint as a mediator between them and Allah. People say that [saints] make sure that their prayers get to Allah, since they are his *wali*. If they get what they want, then they will go again and so on.'¹¹⁷ The shrine's efficacy, and hence the saint, resides in the anticipation and actual fulfilment of wishes/prayers and gaining blessings through the act of visiting, central to which is the viewing, better still the touching of the shrine.¹¹⁸ So, what kinds of activities are involved in the appropriation of shrines?

Having passed the shrine of *Data Sahib* on numerous occasions on my way to the Lahore Museum, I decided one afternoon to pay my own homage, and as usual outside the shrine people were busy buying rose petals and bags of *makhanay*¹¹⁹ before making their way over to the shoe-stands (illus. 48). Barefoot, other visitors and I made our way across the large marble courtyard, passing the homeless, mendicants, picnicking families, and itinerant *fakir*, toward the original shrine that is overshadowed by the grand *Jamia Hajveri* (Hajveri Mosque). Approaching the shrine, men and women are allocated separate access points from which to view the tomb and say their *salaam* to the saint. On the women's side, openings in a marble lattice screen offer the only viewing point of the tomb. A line of women eagerly pushed forward and were ushered along by female guards, who let a few women in at a time to hand over their rose petals/flower garlands to guards on the other side or to attempt to throw them onto the tomb, already showered in flowers and *chadda-raen*,¹²⁰ and raise their hands to say *fatheyba* while intensely gazing at the tomb.¹²¹ It is only during this moment of reciprocal glancing between the faithful and the tomb that desires or wishes (*manat/murad*) can be made and *barkat* sought from the saint, pledging to return should their



48 Stall outside the shrine of *Data Darbar* selling *chaddaraen*, rose petals/garlands, with nearby signs for a palmist and *deg* sellers

manat be granted.¹²² Reluctant to leave, as if gripped by what they saw, some women kissed the lattice; others touched it and rubbed their hands over their eyes. Gradually, the women are persuaded to move on, place a donation in a box if they like, and in return receive as they leave a few rose petals that have been in contact with the tomb. Some women then sit in the area near the tomb and read from the Quran, saying a short *namaz*, or distribute the *makhnay* they brought with them as *tabarak* to the other women,¹²³ keeping some to take home. Just before I left, the potency of the shrine was demonstrated further when a lady came

around with a jug of water and asked all those reading from the Quran to blow onto it, so transforming it into holy water, which she could administer to a sick relative back home.

Having visited the shrine, people left directly, lingered giving alms to the beggars and *fakir* who in return proffered blessings and advice, or bought rings, bangles, or laminated business-card-size printed images of the shrine and saints for themselves or family members at stalls outside the shrine. These are not simply souvenirs but considered sacred, since they are purchased at the saint's shrine and thought to carry blessings from the saint. As Ayesha Ashfaq remarked: 'Those who come from afar will buy something to take back home, and it is often said that it is from *Data* himself. Women wear rings and bangles that they feel are sacred, as they are bought at the *mazaar*.'¹²⁴ Secondary affectivity and belief emanate from proximal connection of the objects to the shrine; however, viewing the tomb and emotional subjugation of oneself at the shrine are primary. As one man who was leaving at the same time as I declared: *Yahan say sab laykar hi jatay hain, bahut kuch laykar!* ('Everyone takes something from here, they take a lot!'). This one line stuck with me, because it suggested that it was the experience of visiting and attaining visual/corporeal proximity to the saint's shrine that induces feelings of 'gaining a lot,' on which the faithful base and sustain their devotion—mixed with a curiosity and wonder at the saint's unwitting munificence.

The visual interaction at shrines cannot aridly be understood as consumption of religious symbolism alone, since something else is at play here and is best described as a pleasure taken in seeing things that are said to have *roshiani* ('brightness')—a glow radiating from a place/object that is felt inside the viewer's body satisfying both heart and mind. Holy places/relics are especially said to have this *roshiani* beauty, which flows from them to the viewer; shrines are often referred to in these terms. As Ejaz Ali clarified: 'In Urdu we say that these *mazaar* are our shining minarets where there is light twenty-four hours a day and that these are Allah's blessings flowing, as the saints have direct contact with Allah.'¹²⁵ The visual exchange that takes place between the shrine and the viewer is not easily converted into a linguistic account, and for many the only way to explain it is as feelings resulting from visual contact and emotions similar to those of the man who passed me that late afternoon, for whom the shrine was a vision of living wealth. Tanveer Akhtar also related:

I feel rest, I feel rest myself, in very much peace . . . a person feels they are in a place out of this world, in a new place. Like if you go to the *darbar* [*Data Sahib*] or Bibi Pak Daman and concentrate and have good intentions . . . then you will get tranquillity, and I have felt this myself. . . . I don't think we can give [the saints] anything, but we can come away with

a lot, we get a lot. . . . Just look at *Data Sahib*, people are eating from there every day, even now, and so wishes come true, there must be something. No, I believe there is a lot, we cannot but get . . . good people who are so close to Allah they are not dead but alive, these places are alive.¹²⁶

At a literal level, saints' shrines are relics from the past and so can be interpreted as inactive; however, it would seem that for much of the public this assumption would be inaccurate, since they view shrines as living, sacred places (*muqaduss*) with spiritual vibrancy and a sense of celestial potency and amazement in the saint's power. Although most people in Lahore agree with the intentions behind shrine visiting, what unsettles some is this exact corpothetic (Pinney 2002a) reaction instigated by the strong visual attraction of the shrine, since this practice flirts with the visual performance of *darshan* associated with Hinduism. Shahida Afzal commented: 'It is a bit like the Indian situation, like they pray to idols, and these people here worship the saints in the same way . . . but I do have respect for the saints, as they are our ancestors, just like the way our grandparents guided us, so they have given us insights.'¹²⁷

In making this comparison, Shahida Afzal alludes to the bodily praxis of the faithful/disciples in front of the shrine, whose exhibition set up almost mimics that of a temple idol or domestic chromolithograph offering itself for *darshan*. At the conceptual centre lies the saint's tomb—usually made of marble with black Quranic inscriptions layered with other accretions, including a green *chaddar*—either embroidered or printed with gold text—next is a profuse scattering of deep-red rose petals, aromatic jasmine, and garlands of saffron-coloured marigolds that delicately suffuse their fragrance into the surroundings. Some shrines deliberately create a *roshiani* atmosphere with decorative electrical lights and small mirrors in the interior walls to enhance the sense of illumination; others have an area to light candles, *deeyay* ('oil lamps'), or incense sticks, especially on Thursdays. This embellished display of the shrine serves to establish and heighten an immersed sensory experience for the faithful, attracting glances and engaging them in a tactile vision of embodied interaction; it is this hold of the shrine as an image that causes the body's senses to be captivated and disturbs those people who deem it un-Islamic. However, this *darshan*-esque visual practice is also a reminder of the importance of visuality in South Asian culture. As Ayesha Ashfaq diplomatically assessed the situation:

This is against Islam, it is not allowed, but then we have elements of Hinduism in our past and they have become part of our beliefs, like Hindus have their idol worship and they bring gifts and flowers to offer, so at the *mazaar* people do similar things . . . people genuflect to the tomb, kiss it, touch it, and stare at it . . . this is not part of our religion but is part of our culture that has been influenced by Hinduism for a long time.¹²⁸

During a saint's *urs* there is an intensification of these activities following the main event—the *ghussal* ('washing') of the saint's tomb,¹²⁹ with large numbers of people flocking to the shrine to pay their respects and then enjoy the festivities of the *mela*. At *Data Sahib's* *urs*, residential areas near the shrine are alerted to the festival by the noise of *toleeyan*, groups of males parading a *chaddar* to collect donations as they dance (*tamal*) to the sound of the *dhhol* in celebration as they make their way to the *mazaar*.¹³⁰ The shrine complex is decorated with lights and outside the *mela* is set up with a variety of stalls selling jewellery, clothes, shoes, toys, pottery, steel utensils, musical cassettes, religious images, rosettes with images of the shrine, food (a speciality called *qatlamay* is made during *urs*), as well as palmists and information stalls of Islamic groups and medical organisations. In the evening, the shrine's courtyard hosts *mahfil-i-naat* and *qaawali* performances¹³¹ that are attended mainly by men, while families have the opportunity to be entertained in nearby Minar-i-Pakistan by the Lucky Irani Circus, which boasts thirteen lions, a miniature horse, and a thirteen-foot long snake. The *mela* and *urs* together present an eclectic mixture of spirituality and recreation—shopping, eating, consultation, and entertainment—and neither clash with nor oppose each other; everything is anticipated. As Ejaz Ali, a veteran attendee of many saints' *urs*, explained:

At the *urs* . . . twenty-five percent read the Quran or hold *qaawali*, women go to keep *manat* . . . about thirty-five percent come for the *tamasha*; they gamble, drink, drugs, pick-pocket, but they never come near the *mazaar*; they stay on the outside, but they do add to the festival's spirits! . . . You get sports like *kabbadi* and some have horse-racing, too. Then there is the *langar*, poetry like you get to listen to *Heer* at Waris Shah, and it is the Punjabi folk culture that appears at the *mela* in the dances, songs, dress, and it is all traditional. . . . These are important, as the persons whose *urs* we celebrate are those who converted so many people to Islam . . . and it is their generations that are now in the thousands, and so these are our ancestors really. It is this belief that draws us to these *babaji* and why day and night people keep on visiting.¹³²

Ejaz Ali, in presenting the many facets of the *urs* and its accompanying *mela*, refers to the significant historical importance and reverence for what he called 'ancestors,' knowledge of whom is shared and recollected through experience of musical and storytelling performances annually at the *urs*, with recurrent visits in-between the annual events. Once again, culture, history, and knowledge are consumed and reinforced through enduring performative events that are participated in primarily through visuality but also in the corporeal and intangible experiences.

It was at such times of historical, cultural, and spiritual renewal through a saint's shrine, with a mix of celebration and recreation, that

the Lahore Museum during the colonial era was also visited by those going to the *urs* of Madho Lal Hussain celebrated at the *Chiragon ka Mela*. This *urs* still takes place in the Baghbanpura area of Lahore near Shalimar Gardens, and other than visiting the shrine in a manner similar to that described for *Data Sahib*—the pinnacle is the lighting of small *chirag/deeyay*, or candles, and throwing them into a large pit that blasts out heat and smoke. Once this ritual is complete, the *mela* is enjoyed to the fullest extent with amusement rides, *arbi qatlamay* ('sweet dough balls with sesame seeds'), potions and herbal cures bought from a *hakeem* ('homeopath') to cure all manner of ailments, and general delight in the variety of sights and experiences on offer. For many, especially those who travel to Lahore, other recreational sites including the Lahore Museum are also consumed with the intention to enjoy and be impressed by new visions whose indecipherability is precisely what attracts.

Visitors/audiences/consumers employing a 'polyscopic' (Taylor 2002:287) vision derive history, culture, curiosity, novelty, and wonder not as fixed and separate genres but as fluid and repetitive and dealing with tradition and modernity. Embroiled within this multiple visual sensorium is the Lahore Museum—meaning that consumption is less about viewing an object/image as evidence of historical chronology or cultural authenticity and more about emotional engagement based on other experiences and idioms that recontextualise the objects and museum as part of an interocular culture. If the Lahore Museum's perception and understanding are examined from a viewpoint of being socialised as part of local visual practices and sites by its audience as *ajaiib*, then this appropriation cannot be understood as improper. Spectatorship in South Asia, once relocated within indigenous ways of seeing (*darshan/dekhna/nazar*) in various visual arenas, demonstrates that the audience is attracted by objects inviting them into a visceral and interested interpretation, which expands and extends beyond the objective to incorporate aspects of history, culture, wonder, novelty, and fantasy. The unresolved audience problematic for South Asian museums remains only because the authoritative museum discourse since their colonial introduction has been reluctant to accommodate local subjectivity, and perhaps if Hendley's (1914) musings had been closely heeded, South Asian museums would have negotiated this Other figure and use of the museum, which ultimately is their own.

HAVE MUSEUMS EVER BEEN MODERN?

Bruno Latour's (1993) treatise on the modern episteme is useful here in thinking about the extent to which the dominance of the museum, based

on the Western model, which stipulates objective knowledge, scientific representation, and by default the modern gaze, has been successfully realised. If the modern museum is approached as cultural space in which classification and systematic visualisation of the self or Other were possible, then in colonial India it was employed in representing colonial ideas on India's social evolution and chronicling the history of the people, culture, and commodities (Chapter 1)—ultimately, an institution that aimed to exploit and modernise the colony. However, what if instead of representation we consider the audience, and for that matter the non-Western museum public and their cultural agency; can this belief in the museum's modern paradigm still be sustained? The case, as presented here and in the previous chapter, alerts us to the constructedness of the modern gaze that masks visceral responses as well as negotiations that are mediated through culturally informed ways of seeing, which reveal polysemous meanings, experiences, and biographies of objects/collections (Hoskins 1998). In the past, communication with the indigenous audience was thought to suffer from hurdles similar to those facing European modern museums (Bennett 1995), whereby the mass public retained a so-called medieval gaze and sensibilities that craved the strange, new, and wondrous. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, museum administrators in Europe and India could dismiss this inappropriate visitor behaviour in terms of illiteracy and lack of education. However, was this supposition just an ideal, a hope that a modern museum public would eventually emerge with increased education and social progress in the East and the West? The desire for a modern museum public was definitely felt in colonial India by the colonists and those with 'second sight' (Prakash 1999:34) but was consistently unable to displace indigenous practices that were accustomed to consuming representations of culture, history, and knowledge not as objective displays but as lived culture, performed rituals, visual narratives, corporeal practices, and recursive festivities. The museum in South Asia entered this living cultural space and ended up occupying a precariously dualistic position; for the elite and curators it provided informal education to be employed in reforming and modernising Indian society, but for the mass public the attraction was connected to the inverse image—the *ajaiib*.

Understanding the *ajaiib* interpretative mode of visitors to the Lahore Museum (Chapter 4) through its elucidation in other visualscapes/exhibitionism in contemporary Lahore—television/films, bazaar, and shrines, which socialise the museum and provide habitual knowledge and experience to visitors—reveals the local appropriateness and hence desirability of the *ajaiib*. Consumption in these three arenas is united by the fact that South Asian visual regimes anticipate a sensory and emotive experience of the object rather than seeing and understanding objectified knowledge.

It is apparent that the modern gaze has failed to displace indigenous visuality in the museum, since it negates the instinctual need to see/feel/believe the marvellous and fascinating. By socialising the museum within this larger visual field that satisfies the desire for an affective imagination, visual tactility, and emotive response, we see that Hendley's (1914) prescription was accurate and that to be successful museums in South Asia need to address vernacular consumption, practices/meanings, and interpretative modalities/interactions. In taking recourse of their visual gaze, as informed by other visual arenas, it is the Lahore Museum's visitors that make the museum a success by preventing the existence of a singular determinacy and opening it up to fluid and multiple ways of seeing and interpreting, in effect localising it.

The museum in South Asia has to move away from its strict focus on learning, knowledge acquisition, and linguistic understanding and become aware of other visceral and phenomenological appropriations that are taking place in the museum—of feelings, imaginings, and pleasures that are *roohani* ('touching the soul'), as Ejaz Ali put it.¹³³ By looking beyond its four walls, the museum needs to resynchronise its activities with the visualscape of the society it inhabits, where enduring and contemporary images, practises, and ideas co-exist, and modernity mingles with the mythic to create a space that invites the imagination to flourish. In addition to the key concepts and metaphors for which the modern museum stands—namely, progress, reform, education, history/culture, and civilisation—the museum in South Asia has to accept its ontological indeterminacy, which enthralls visitors and presents a fecund situation close to that described by Chris Pinney for Indian photography, wherein the 'ability to conjure multiple ways of seeing the world that escape a single determinate spatiality is a source of delight' (2002b:271). In effect, the museum in South Asia remains ignorant of the advice given by Hendley (1914) that success lies in being attentive to attractions as found in other spaces of museum spirit and paying attention to the local visitors' needs; so perhaps the museum also needs to learn from its communities. It would then be inappropriate to end with anything but a few words from a visitor who tells of his experience of the Lahore Museum:

When I am looking and going around I don't feel like I am in a museum, I feel like I am in a dream and get so caught up in it. I think about who made these things and how they came here, I lose myself, and time as well. My feet do not stay on the ground, they leap into history itself, and many times I am in the museum and the guards say 'it is time to go,' and I realise I am the only one left!¹³⁴

EPILOGUE



Since my initial research, some changes at the Lahore Museum are apparent: a new director has been appointed, some of the older officers have retired or left, and there are signs of investment in the museum, with the most visible being the acquisition of the old Tollinton Market (1864 Punjab Exhibition Building) in 2005 (illus. 49). Recently this building has been converted into the Lahore City Heritage Museum, which in an interesting way sutures the past and the present of the Lahore Museum while physically adding to it and increasing the heterogeneity of the phenomenological experience in each section. The Tollinton Market was renovated to its original state by the Parks and Horticultural Authority following lengthy negotiations regarding its future between the Punjab Government, commercial developers, and cultural organisations such as the Lahore Preservation Society, who persisted for restoration; finally, it was inaugurated by then Chief Minister of Punjab Ch. Pervaiz Elahi on January 19, 2006. At that time, it was still unclear how this extra space would be utilised by the Lahore Museum, but currently it contains three galleries (illus. 50) (Sultanate, Mughal, and Sikh/British) that display replica images and maps pertaining to each period in Lahore's history. This annex of the Lahore Museum is still developing in terms of exhibitionary strategies, although the Officer In-Charge claimed that, owing to security concerns, a reluctance prevailed concerning the display of actual objects. Thus right now it is impossible to say how the museum may evolve in the near future, but at least extra space has been acquired to display unseen collections; only the implementation remains.

Internally, the museum is also undergoing some changes: new labels have been added, and more daylight enters the museum's main ground-floor galleries since the removal of window blocks and false ceilings.



49 Lahore City Heritage Museum, formerly Tollinton Market



50 Galleries inside the Lahore City Heritage Museum

Major additions have been made in the General Gallery, where donations from F. S. Aijazzudin have added substantially to the Sikh Section, which was originally planned to attract Sikh pilgrims/tourists who annually visit the Punjab as part of *Guru yatra*, which takes in various Gurdwaras in the Punjab. Direct investment in the museum's permanent exhibits is apparent in the renovation of the Independence Movement Gallery, and such opportunities encourage Gallery In-Charges to overcome object fetishisation and become involved with the more creative aspects of museum work—curatorship—scope for which has always existed but been sidelined for fear of responsibility, lack of funds, or plain negligence. So, slowly new dimensions are entering into the repertoire of the museum, which have the potential to make its officers' duties more active.

These additions to the museum can be thought of as part of the current interest in renovation, beautification, or, as some see it, commercialisation of Lahore—for example, food streets have cropped up in such areas as Old Anarkali next to the museum, places that are marketed as living heritage and add to the interocular visualscape of the museum. This heritage discourse coupled with tourism and increased revenue, ideologically and economically, can justify funding expansion/renovation of the museum, but it can also distance the museum from its most ardent consumer—the local visitors and their needs. Will the desire to see more wonders and curiosities guide the structure of the new gallery spaces in the Lahore City Heritage Museum or in the refurbishment of the Independence Movement Gallery, and what will be exhibited? These questions can be answered only at a later date, but the recurring problem that has plagued the Lahore Museum in the past, and still does today, is precisely the indigenous visitors.

Visitors continue to remain loyal—being enthralled and enchanted by the visual treats on offer—and perhaps to some extent the alteration and expansion of the museum will facilitate greater responsiveness to their needs. But the low regard for visitors has been based precisely on incommensurability between the ideal visitor based on the modern museum public and the South Asian visitor, whose priorities are not only with learning but also embodied interpretation. So, will the impending changes force visitors to use the museum in a new way?

It is unlikely that suddenly the majority of visitors will come to learn and abandon their anticipation of the museum spectacle or be amazed by the new novelties/curiosities on display. Since colonialism the Lahore Museum has battled to control the signification of objects for local visitors, who employ enduring visual practices and desires to consume what is essentially another exhibitionary space. This distinction is similar to the difference between the pedagogic/performative (Bhabha 1994:241),

and given that culture, history, issues of modernity/tradition, and identity are debated and experienced in other visual arenas of society as repetitive performances, it is unlikely that adoption of modern display techniques will shift the popular, and I would say rightful, image of the museum for a South Asian audience—of an *Ajaib Ghar*. Perhaps the real change needs to come from the museum in first acknowledging the visitors' appropriation as legitimate for this cultural technology in South Asia.

Notions of cultural heritage, patrimony, and objects deemed antiquities continue to suffuse the museum's rhetoric as a national institution; however, in Pakistan today the issue is one not just of Eurocentric museum discourse but also of the global politics within which this post-colonial nation is embroiled. Although worrisome, this is the most palpable and visible change to have occurred in the Lahore Museum since my research. When I last visited the Lahore Museum at the beginning of 2011, I was surprised to see both front gates closed, although I could see that the main entrance was open and visitors were milling about or waiting to go in. I soon learned that the new way in was through the small side gate with extra security checks in place. As I caught up with the guards (who wondered where I had been since my research), I enquired about the new set-up, and the only response was: 'Well, that is the state of things these days!' Only when I got to the front façade did I realise the full extent of this new 'state': sandbags piled up high on the paths leading to the other gates, with armed guards and blockades positioned in front of them and barbed wire lining the boundary fence between the museum and the NCA next door. Much like the pre-Partition period of 1940s, when the Lahore Museum had to think of security because of the political and ideological threats that could potentially misconstrue collections through their polysemous signification, today the museum faces similar dilemmas. But so far it has escaped, while other secular, religious, state, and educational institutions are being actively targeted in Pakistan, including *Data Darbar*.

In addition to the ongoing changes within the Lahore Museum just mentioned, it is the socialising reality beyond the museum that has radically altered as part of the incumbent problematics being faced by Pakistan's endemic sociopolitical instability that more than ever is questioning political and cultural ideology, identity, and future pathways. This insecurity is attributed at face value to the consolidation, politically and in terms of activities, of militant religious groups with puritanical ideologies seeking the goal of establishing either a 'true' Islamic state, or *khilafat*, in the region. However, it is of no use to simply ascribe this upsurge in religious conservatism as responsive reactionism of extremist groups to global politics alone and homogenise their divergent

aspirations and religious interpretations under a fundamentalist banner that contains a multitude of Jihadists, neo-Talibans, and Wa'habists. Ideological, structural, and cultural uncertainties are, and have been, implicit to Pakistan's existence since its early years, resulting from a combination of fragile provincial-centre relations, weak civil institutions, and strong military/security structures (see Bennett Jones 2009; Hussain 2007; Misra 2008 for analysis of Pakistan's political predicaments and machinations). However, what is new in this volatile landscape is the transformation of controlled/tolerated Islamic groups and mullahs into conservative formations that perpetrate violent action and cultural reformation through various *jihad* and destructive expressions not only globally but also internally against the Pakistani state and society. In part, this internal discontent owes itself to what Owen Bennett Jones notes as 'successive Pakistani leaders . . . showing little sympathy for Pakistan's various cultures' (2009:44); and although Islam has failed to unite Pakistan, any pertinent query into the nation must involve 'Islamic questions' (ibid.:75) that have been to a large extent taken for granted. So what are the implications for cultural institutions such as museums in Pakistan, and what role can these institutions play in this complicated and difficult nexus of religion, politics, history, and culture?

For a museum like the Lahore Museum, whose holdings pay homage to the diversity and pluralism in Pakistan's history and culture, as this book has shown, the risk of being on the wrong side of prevailing ideologies may be all too evident. Yet I would like to suggest that this precarious situation may actually present an ideal opportunity for Pakistani museums broadly to assert themselves and become central players in their cultural landscape—they have the ability to present counterimages, histories, and realities of Pakistan without being antinationalist (see Bhatti 2010). Museums can use the cultural heritage they possess to be positive forces that create awareness of forgotten or eliminated history and culture that are part of, and belong to, Pakistan: the antiquity of the Indus Civilisations; Buddhist, Hindu, and Sikh communities that thrived and contributed in the past to the cultural, artistic, and economic fabric of the country. This past, as exhibited and safeguarded in archaeological museums and sites as well as museums such as the Lahore Museum, can challenge the hijacking of Pakistan's already weak identity, which is pushing for a particularised slant on culture and society. In this respect, it is a case of not only opening up a cultural debate in Pakistan and what might be called its 'national communities' (Bennett Jones 2009:74) but also of connecting national identity to the material evidence that survives in its museums to construct, or more precisely reclaim, a new vision of the nation that is secular and plural. Presently, these are conjectural possibilities that have yet to be recognised and made real by

the museum establishment and cultural bodies in Pakistan, but, like the transformation needed to create a stable and sustainable future for the political state, the impetus and reawakening need to come from within the nation (Synnott 2009) and its institutions.

On reflection, despite the inadequacies of the Lahore Museum, it occupies an enviable position: it owns some of the best collections in the world, is now being invested in, has a large number of visitors, and offers the opportunity of revising the weak ideology of history and culture in Pakistan and protecting it from attempts at false cleansing by extremist elements. But what of the future of the museum itself? Of course, the old galleries could be refurbished to preserve the collections, and better lighting and more labels added; yet if these changes were to lead to a total rehaul and streamlining of exhibits, then the Lahore Museum in my mind would lose the attractions and spirit that distinguish it from other museums and make it popular with its public. The elements of undecipherability and curiosity that draw the gaze into a visual contract with the objects is in keeping with the South Asian visitors' desire, expectations, and satisfaction, acceptance of which would alleviate the sense of lack felt at the museum simply because it is being perceived and experienced in terms other than conventional learning. The museum in South Asia cannot strive to be a derivative of the Western institution, since it has its own counterhistory of birth, growth, tropicalisation, and appropriation by the indigenous audience, part of which has been narrated in this book. South Asian museums, in order to offer a better experience to their visitors, have to understand their own predicaments and communities and then think about change and development through the local setting; so perhaps it is best to end by letting one of the many visitors to the Lahore Museum state his hopes for the museum:

I recently visited a park in the Khewra salt range, where they had made buildings out of salt brick and illuminated them—they were so impressive. One thing that really interested me was this mosque, and when it was lit the different salt gave different colours, and that really attracted me, as well as the waterfall there, as when the water reached the bottom it formed like bunches of grapes . . . it was so *dilchasp* ['interesting']. . . . If there were things like these here in the museum, that would be really wonderful and would make it even more worthwhile.¹

GLOSSARY



A mixture of Punjabi and Urdu words has been used in this book, and, although many overlap for speakers of both in Lahore, some are specific; so, to give some linguistic differentiation, I place word-source in parentheses—e.g., (Pun) = Punjabi, (Urd) = Urdu. Some Hindi (Hin) words are also included, although many Urdu/Punjabi words are shared with Hindi/Hindustani, which is the case if no linguistic root is given.

aaj: today

aakidatmand: faithful religiosity (Urd)

acchi: good

adhara: institution (Urd)

adhat: habit

ajaib: strange/curiosity

baba(ji): elderly/ancestor

baradari: Mughal summer house with twelve doorways (Urd)

barkat: plenitude gained from piety/prayer

bartan: kitchen utensils

baymazbhi: unreligious

bhut: statues, idols

biraderi: family clan

charka: spinning wheel

charpai: traditional woven bed with wooden frame and legs (Urd)

cheesain: things/objects

chidia ghar: zoo

chimta: tongs used for cooking but also a musical instrument

chirag(on): lamp(s)—oil, wax, or gas

chownk: junction

chulha: cooking stove

dahi-balay: snack of fried lentil cakes, gram-flour savouries, potatoes, onions, and yoghurt

darshan: viewing/seeing, having sight of a deity or holy object/person

deeyay: oil lamps

dekhna: to watch/look/view

desi: local

devi: goddess

dhol: a large drum

dholki: smaller version of dhol played with hands rather than batons

dhoti: male garment of cloth wrapped around lower part of the body

dilchasp: interesting

dilkhush: happiness of the heart, something affecting the heart

dramay: televised soap operas

duppatta: long scarf worn by women and girls either draped or covering the head

durri: large woven floor mats

fakir: ascetic mendicant

galli(yan): inhabited alleyway(s)

gaon: village

ghar: house/home

ghum: sadness/sorrow

ghussal: bathing/washing a person, monument or tomb (Urd)

hakeem: homeopath

hartal: strike

hayraan: stunned/amazed

hookah/hookay: smoking pipe(s)

hosh: aware/consciousness

inquilab: revolution (Urd)

jailee: illegal

jharoka(y): (balconies): usually decorated with carvings

jinn: spirit. In Islam jinn live alongside humans but are not visible, having been made from smokeless fire by Allah.

kajal: antimony, lampblack

kamra(y): room(s)

khainchtay: to pull

khandan: extended family/joint family system

- khas*: special
khushi: happiness
kihona(y): toy(s)
kimkhab: brocade silk
lagana: to cast
lagjani: to get attached (Pun)
langar: distribution of food at shrines, festivals, temples, or Gurdwaras.
mahal: palace
mahaul: atmosphere
mali: gardener
manat: wish
mandir: temple
markaz: centre (Urd)
mata: mother (Hin)
mehfoozh: to keep safe (Urd)
milana: to come together
millat: solidarity (Urd)
milthay-jhulthay: similar
mirch(an): chilli(es)
mohalla: residential neighbourhood
mujjahidin: patriots
muquaduss: sacred (Urd)
murad: see *manat*
murda(y): corpse(s)
murid: disciple of a saint or *pir*
murti: devotional idol used during worship
mutalakat: connections (Urd)
namaz: Muslim prayer
navadrat: a collection (Urd)
nazar: vision
nazar-wattu: evil-eye destroyers/detractors
nishaaniyan: mementos/souvenirs
pagri: turban
panch: five
payal: anklets
pehchaan: identity
pir: sufi guide

- pirri*: low-footed stool
- puja*: worship of a deity (Hindu)
- purani*: old (plural = *puranay*)
- pardah*: social separation of men and women as well as the act of veiling
by Muslim women
- qatlamay*: a large deep-fried, spiced pancake
- qaum*: nation (Urd)
- qaumi*: national (Urd)
- raehain-saehain*: way of living
- reeti-rivaj*: traditional cultural practices
- rooh*: bodily spirit, soul
- roshiani*: brightness
- rozi-roti*: earning a living
- saehor-o-taffri*: recreation (Urd)
- sakafat*: cultural heritage (Urd)
- sakafati*: cultural (Urd)
- sanakhth*: identity (Urd)
- sayasat*: politics
- shaheed*: martyr
- shari'at*: personal Islamic laws
- shauk*: interest/hobby
- sheesh*: mirrored
- sherwani(an)*: men's garment worn over tunic(s)
- sun-i-sunai*: word of mouth
- surat*: in an Islamic context refers to a Qu'ranic verse
- talwar*: sword
- tamal*: dance by a group of men to a *dhol* (Pun)
- tamasha*: amusement/spectacle
- thakur*: feudal title
- tehbreek*: history (Urd)
- tehbreeki*: historical (Urd)
- toli*: group of men/boys; during a saint's *urs*, groups carrying a sheet to
collect alms on their way to the shrine are also referred to as *toli*. (Pun)
- toph*: canon
- topi*: hat/cap
- ulama*: Muslim learned scholars (Urd)
- ummah*: universal Muslim brotherhood (Urd)

unpar: uneducated/illiterate

utharna: to remove

vilaeyti: foreign (Pun)

virsa: heritage

wali: friend of God

warna: to circle an item around a person's body or head; intended usually
to remove/ward off evil eye (Pun)

yaadash: memory

zat: social/caste group

zenana: part of a house or institution reserved for women (Urd)

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NOTES



PROLOGUE

1. Kipling and Thornton (2002:25–26) (reprinted by the NCA).
2. Attendance figures provided by the Lahore Museum (2004).
3. See Anjum Rehmani (1999).
4. See Savia Viegas (2001) for an account of visitors at the Prince of Wales Museum, Mumbai.

CHAPTER 1

1. 1868:i–ii.
2. I am not using this term to conjure an Orientalist museum image, but this is what the majority of Lahorites call the Lahore Museum.
3. Since 1981, Lahore, like other South Asian cities, has experienced a gradual shift toward replacing old colonial names of roads, parks, and buildings with nationalistic ones: so Mall Road is now Shahrah-i-Quaid-e-Azam. (F. S. Aijazuddin [2003:12] also notes this change.)
4. All galleries are permanent: on the ground floor—General: this gallery contains four subgalleries (Sikh, Southern Africa, Chinese, and Woodwork of Pakistan), which are referred to as ‘galleries’ rather than sections; Islamic; Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist; General Gallery of Burma, Tibet, and Thailand; Prehistoric and Indus; Gandhara; Miniature Painting; Contemporary Paintings; Manuscripts and Calligraphy; Jain *Mandir*; Ethnological II (Swat); Ethnological III (Fabrics and Clay Models); Arms; Ethnological I (Provincial); in the basement and mainly closed, the Sadequain Gallery. On the first floor: Independence Movement; Shaheed; Pakistan Postage Stamps; Contemporary Handicrafts; Coins and Medals galleries. At the time of my research, galleries numbered 18 but have been subsequently subsectioned into 22, although based on the same

collections and displays. Therefore, names of galleries in previous publications may refer to a lesser or greater number based on varying degrees of internal gallery differentiation.

5. A short procedure of passing through a metal detection unit and a bag check to remove sharp objects; recently an additional check has been introduced at the entrance gate owing to terrorist threats against public institutions.
6. Sankritised Jaina is used by the museum.
7. The Gandhara area today forms parts of the Peshawar Valley and the states of Swat, Buner, and Bajur, right up to the valley of Taxila, Northern Pakistan.
8. Popularly referred to as the Fasting Buddha and represents one of the Lahore Museum's masterpieces.
9. Images displayed in the gallery are referred to as 'paintings,' despite there being mosaics, calligraphy, and etchings in pen.
10. This gallery was closed for the entire year that I was at the Lahore Museum (September 2002 to September 2003), pending an investigation into a theft; it was reopened in November 2003.
11. This form of calligraphy inscribes a word or small text as an image of a human face, flowers, or animals. See J. L. Kipling's *Man and Beast in India* (1891).
12. This is permanently kept closed, since it poses a security risk and is opened only for VIP or VVIP visits to the strong room located just behind the door.
13. Referred to as such by museum staff and visitors.
14. These clay models, also called Poonah, Lucknow, and Krishanagar models in the colonial archive, are extensively found in South Asian museums that date back to the colonial era—such as the Indian Museum, Kolkata, and the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai—and in other museum collections formed as part of colonial exchange—such as Museum Victoria, Melbourne (see Smith and Stevenson 2010). Also see Pinney (1990) for the use of these models as visualisation of Indian 'types.'
15. I use 'regions' rather than 'provinces,' because some displays refer to climatic difference, others district or ethnic.
16. The gallery text in English states they are 'a pagan tribe living in the remote north western part of Pakistan. Legend states that they are descendants of the legions of Alexander of Greece, who marched into this part of the country around 327 B.C.'
17. Contains a selection of Sadequain's paintings donated by the artist on August 28, 1974. During my research, it was shut to the public for the reason that visitors tend to touch/scratch and so could cause damage.

18. These are multiple opinions evoked by visitors, museum workers, academics, and Punjab Government policy makers on the Lahore Museum.
19. Stated in an opening speech by the director, Dr. Liaquat Ali Niazi, at a quiz show October 11, 2002; repeated on other educational or official occasions.
20. Reprinted in Georges Bataille (2001), *Story of the Eye*.
21. Exceptions include use of exhibitions by the Indian National Congress as part of their annual meetings to expound the merits of *Swadeshi*. (See Peter Hoffenberg [2004].)
22. Romila Thapar describes this eighteenth-century scene: 'Officers of the East India Company at Calcutta were busy translating texts relating to law and to religion from Sanskrit and Persian . . . to understand the high culture of the colony which they were governing. An assertion of power also required a knowledge of the history and culture of those now in a subservient status' (2002:6).
23. For a more detailed account of the history of the Indian Museum, Kolkata, see John MacKenzie (2009), Chapter 10, and Mark Elliott (2003).
24. See Ray Desmond's (1982) account of the India Museum in Leadenhall Street (also Greenhalgh [1994] and Breckenridge [1989] on exhibitions).
25. As Romila Thapar notes, the East India Company had to 'adopt in effect an aggressive assertion of authority which included violence and conquest' (2002:17).
26. Referred to as such in official documents.
27. Objects themselves were not necessary, as many sketch folios, lithographs, photographs, and plaster casts in museums attest; the visual 'impression' of the object served (and travelled) just as well (see Guha-Thakurta [2002] in relation to the archaeological photography of James Fergusson).
28. Adding to those mentioned: in 1856, branches of the Madras Museum were created as central museums in Bellary, Cuddalore, Coimbatore, Mangalore, Ootacomund, and Rajmunday (all later closed in 1860); in 1857, the Trivandrum Museum and embryonic steps toward the Victoria and Albert Museum, Bombay.
29. Markham and Hargreaves (1936:6).
30. A full list of all the museums can be found in Part II as a 'Directory' in Markham and Hargreaves (1936).
31. The Central Museum, the Lahore Central Museum, and the Lahore Museum, all refer to the museum in Lahore; for consistency, I employ only the last term.

32. Dated March 14, 1855, Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 44–46, March 31, 1855, Serial 73. In Punjab Secretariat Archives (from now on, PSA).
33. The British annexed the Punjab between 1845 and 1849 after defeating remnants of Maharajah Ranjit Singh's Sikh Empire.
34. McLeod:1855 n.p.
35. Circular Number 15, dated February 14, 1855, Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 44–46, March 31, 1855, Serial 73, PSA.
36. Ibid.
37. A copy was attached to the Proceeding. The extracts were taken from *Bombay Times* of December 13, 1854, and reprinted by The Chronicle Press, Lahore (1855).
38. Circular Number 15, dated February 14, 1855, Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 44–46, March 31, 1855, Serial 73, PSA.
39. Ibid.
40. In a letter from R. Temple to D. E. McLeod dated March 28, 1855. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 44–46, March 31, 1855, Serial 97, PSA.
41. Little archival material is available on this early period; reports are indexed in the *Punjab Gazette* but missing from gazettes at the PSA.
42. Printed in the *Punjab Gazette* in the Supplement section, dated October 22, 1868, PSA.
43. Located just behind the present-day Lahore Museum and National College of Arts, which occupy the *baradari's* Nakhli Garden.
44. T. H. Thornton, before his arrival in Lahore, either in 1859 or 1860, was Assistant Commissioner for Ludhiana, Amritsar, and Gujarat (Qureshi 2000:1).
45. To R. A. Davis Esq., Secretary Government Punjab & Its Dependencies, dated September 25, 1860. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 60–61, October 6, 1860, Serial 1277, PSA.
46. The letter's appendix gives a detailed list of the casts on display, with facial casts of Northern Tribes attributed to the Schlagintweit brothers, examples of which exist in the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai; none remain at the Lahore Museum.
47. To R. A. Davis Esq., Secretary Government Punjab & Its Dependencies, dated September 25, 1860. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 60–61, October 6, 1860, Serial 1277, PSA.
48. Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 4, February 28, 1863, Serial 6807, PSA.
49. Museums mentioned include Lahore, Peshawar, Umrtsar [sic], Delhi, Mooltan [sic], and Simla in India and Royal Gardens

- in Kew, which received commercial samples for valuation by Dr. Forbes-Watson.
50. Letter from S. W. Forsyth (Vice President of the Punjab Agriculture and Horticulture Society) to The Secretary Punjab Government, dated August 1860. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 99–100, September 8, 1860, PSA.
 51. See *Madras Exhibition of 1855: Catalogue Raisonné of the Thirty Classes into which the Articles in the Exhibition are Divided*, by H. P. Hawkes (1855).
 52. Ibid.:30.
 53. Prizes were awarded from the general funds gathered for the exhibition. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 47, July 18, 1863, PSA.
 54. The prospectus was translated into the vernacular and sent to Maharaja of Cashmere & Jumoo [*sic*], Patiala, Raja of Jheend, Mundee, Kapurthala, and Chamba. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 51 and 23, August 1, 1863, PSA.
 55. The family today has a private museum: Fakir Khana in Bhati Gate.
 56. See Saifur Rahman Dar (1990) for the family's history.
 57. I would like to thank F. S. Saifuddin Sahib for bringing this to my attention and providing his great-grandfather's (F. S. Khairuddin) correspondence with Robert Montgomery on the matter.
 58. See *Official Handbook of the Punjab Exhibition of 1864* for a complete list of objects.
 59. A future curator of the Lahore Museum, in a reprinted extract *History of Lahore Museum*, Lahore Museum Bulletin, Vol. VII, Nos. 1 and 2 (January–December 1994), from his *A Descriptive Guide to the Department of Industrial Arts* (1909).
 60. Baden-Powell lists each local contribution, totalling Rs. 34,424. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 6–7, December 1, 1866, Serial No. 57, PSA.
 61. Quoted in F. S. Aijazuddin (2003:111–12).
 62. A range of tickets were on sale: Season, Rs. 2, Rs. 1, 8 Annas, 4 Annas, 2 Annas. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 24, April 23, 1864, Serial No. 32, PSA.
 63. Ibid.
 64. Ibid.
 65. *General Report on the Lahore Central Museum up to March, 1868*, Baden-Powell, in *Punjab Gazette* (Supplement) of December 22, 1868, PSA.
 66. Ibid.
 67. Ibid.

68. By June 1867, committees were formed in several districts of the Lahore Division in connection with local museums to cooperate with the Lahore Museum; an initiative of T. H. Thornton. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 83–84, July 6, 1867, PSA.
69. *General Report on the Lahore Central Museum up to March, 1868*, Baden-Powell in *Punjab Gazette* (Supplement) December 22, 1868:433, PSA.
70. Ibid.
71. Dr. Forbes-Watson (reporter on the products of India to the Secretary of State for India) collected 700 ‘working samples’ of cloth, cut them into strips, and formed 20 sets of the catalogue: 13 were distributed to museums in Britain, such as the India Museum, and 7 in India; the Lahore Museum still holds theirs in surprisingly good condition. The fabrics were also used to create ‘mini-museums’ displayed on a rotating stand.
72. 1869:520.
73. *General Report on the Lahore Central Museum up to March, 1868*, Baden-Powell, in *Punjab Gazette* (Supplement) December 22, 1868:433 (PSA). Although in the *Report on the Central Museum, Lahore 1868–1869*, Baden-Powell acknowledges receipt of only Rs. 100, said to be highly inadequate with little margin for expenditure on purchases.
74. Ibid. Visitor numbers for December 1867 = 255; January 1868 = 735; February 1868 = 18,256; March 1868 = 8,539. Visitors were not charged entry fee, and numbers were calculated as each visitor deposited a wooden counter in a box (*Report on the Central Museum, Lahore 1868–1869*).
75. See Naazish Ata-Ullah (2000) and Mahrugh Tarapor (1980) on J. L. Kipling.
76. See Tim Barringer (2005) for more on J. L. Kipling’s early career in England.
77. Quoted in Tarapor (1980:62).
78. This was stated in a letter from J. B. Peile, a former Director of Public Instruction, to J. L. Kipling, quoted in Ata-Ullah (2000:228).
79. Letter from J. L. Kipling, Principal, Lahore School of Art, to the Secretary to Government, Punjab, dated May 27, 1875 (1875:466), Government of Punjab, Home Department Proceedings, June 1875, No. 2, 462–466, PSA.
80. Ibid.:464.
81. *Lahore as It Was* has no original publication date, but it may be around 1876, when Kipling is said to have written a guidebook (see Gianluigi 1994). Also see Bahadur (1892:353–83) for an elite

- Indian's description of the Lahore Museum, including sketches of Buddhist sculptures by the author under J. L. Kipling's supervision.
82. Similar to Rudyard Kipling's opening of *Kim* (1912).
 83. The preface to *Kim* (1912) states that the story was written twelve years after Rudyard Kipling left India (in 1889), so the Lahore Museum described is at this stage of development.
 84. 1912:14.
 85. See his articles in the *Journal of Indian Art and Industry* (from now on JIAI); for example, *Brass & Copperware of the Punjab* in Vol. 1:1–8.
 86. I shall refer to the art school in Lahore as MSA from now on, because it is unclear in official records when this came into common usage—but the annual reports use this particular name.
 87. *Report of Public Instruction and Its Dependencies for 1875–1876*. Reprinted in *Official Chronicle of Mayo School of Art* (2003:33).
 88. *Report of Public Instruction and Its Dependencies for 1878–1879* (1880), OIOC V/24/933.
 89. An annual list of objects presented and donated was published in the *Punjab Gazette*; the objects mentioned are in the *Punjab Gazette*, June 29, 1871:818–20, PSA.
 90. The official setting up of the Archaeological Survey of India under Director General Alexander Cunningham in 1870 and Indian Treasure Trove Act of 1878 to retain Indian antiquities within India must have contributed greatly to this; see *Descriptive List of Selected Buddhist Sculptures in the Lahore Central Museum by Major—General A. Cunningham, C.S.I., Director General of The Archaeological Survey of India* in Supplement to *Punjab Gazette*, July 24, 1873:631–36.
 91. An extract from Mr. Ferguson to the Secretary of State dated August 11, 1878. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 157, July 1878, PSA.
 92. The file (*ibid.*) also contains a *Memo on Proposed Removal of the Yusafzai Sculptures from Lahore Museum to the India Museum London* by J. L. Kipling.
 93. Kipling (1878).
 94. This was a modification of the scheme outlined in the paper of January 3, 1884; see *Museums & Exhibitions Resolution* in JIAI 1886:Vol.1.
 95. The resolution is reprinted in full in the first volume of *The Journal of Indian Art* (1886), Vol. 1, No. 1, OIOC P.P.1803.kf. (1886:3).
 96. See Hoffenberg (2001) for an examination of how Indian objects participated in exhibitions and entered new markets.

97. *The Journal of Indian Art* (1886), Vol. 1, No. 1, 3–4, OIOC P.P.1803.kf.
98. *The Journal of Indian Art* (1886), Vol. 1, No. 1, 3, OIOC P.P.1803.kf. Earlier efforts in this direction include John Forbes-Watson's (1866) *Textile Manufactures and Costumes of the People of India*. Forbes-Watson extensively uses the terminology of 'samples,' and one way of displaying them was in cases he calls 'trade museums.'
99. The resolution recommends that a complete collection of commercial products be maintained in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, with a descriptive dictionary for accurate knowledge of resources in India.
100. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1892–1893* (1893), OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048.
101. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1893–1894* (1894), OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048.
102. Suggested by Baden-Powell and J. L. Kipling in Letter from H. C. Fanshawe Offg. Junior Secretary to Government, Punjab, and Its Dependencies. Dated March 28, 1885. Department of Revenue & Agriculture, OIOC P/2528.
103. Ibid.:n.p.
104. *Monograph on Woollen Manufactures of the Punjab in 1884–1885* (1886), wherein the samples of raw and manufactured wool of each district are directed by the Financial Commissioner to be deposited in the Lahore Museum.
105. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1891–1892* (1892), OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048.
106. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1892–1893* (1893), OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048.
107. A Magic Lantern was purchased in 1892 for a series of lectures inaugurated in spring at the museum in collaboration with the Punjab Text Book Committee; said to be well attended and focusing chiefly on scientific subjects (*The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1892–1893*, OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048).
108. See Pervaiz Vandal and Sajida Vandal (2006) for a biography of Bhai Ram Singh.
109. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1892–1893*, OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048.
110. See Barringer (2005) for details.
111. In report from F. H. Andrews to the Revenue Secretary, Punjab dated July 20, 1894. In Home Proceedings, General Department, No. 21, August 1894, PSA.
112. Printed in Proceeding No. 31 of the Home Proceedings, General Department, August 1894, PSA.

113. Reprinted extract *History of Lahore Museum* from *A Descriptive Guide to the Department of Industrial Arts* (1909) in Lahore Museum Bulletin, Vol. VII, Nos. 1 and 2 (January–December 1994).
114. Ibid.
115. *Report on the Museum Conference*, held on December 27–31, 1907, at the Indian Museum, Calcutta. In Proceeding No. 9, dated February 15, 1908. Proceedings of the Department of Commerce and Industry, January 1909, Practical Arts and Museums, OIOC P/8527.
116. *Report on the Working of the Lahore Museum for the Year 1912–1913* in the Punjab Secretariat Library (PSL from now on), E 52.
117. Unlike Calcutta and Delhi, provincial museums did not have access to imperial funds for their purchases and were dependent on local government. *Report on the Working of the Lahore Museum for the Year 1916–1917*, PSL, E 52.
118. *Report on the Working of the Lahore Museum for the Year 1913–1914*, PSL, E 52.
119. See *ibid.*: the local government sanctioned a grant of Rs. 25,000 for the proposed extension, because exhibits had encroached the office, library, and printing room.
120. *Information Supplied by Dr. Vogel Regarding Museums in India*, in *The Report of the Conference of Orientalists Including Museums and Archaeology Held in Simla* (1911:99–117), PSL.
121. For resolutions passed see Appendix D in *The Report of the Conference of Orientalists Including Museums and Archaeology Held in Simla* (1911:97–99), PSL.
122. Letter from M. Coose, Offg. Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, to The Principal MSA, Ram Singh, dated June 11, 1912. In File H-35, 1908–1921, NCAA.
123. Heath was Member of Royal Society of Miniature Painters since 1900, Member of Art Workers Guild, London, Exhibitor of Royal Academy since 1890, and in 1915 a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. In a letter from Lionel Heath to Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, dated May 22, 1913, NCAA.
124. I am not suggesting that the notion of ‘art’ remained unchanged: Lionel Heath introduced modifications in sync with changes in society and taste, but the subject focus was the same.
125. Representatives from the Geological Survey of India, Archaeological Survey of India and Agricultural Departments, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Government of Ceylon, Federated Malay States, Bombay Natural History Society, and Straits Settlements and Sarawak were also invited.

126. See the *Report of the Museums Conference Held in Madras* (1912:2), PSL, U.9.
127. The *Report of the Museums Conference Held in Madras* (1912:19), PSL, U.9.
128. *Report on the Working of the Central Museum, Lahore, for the Year 1912–1913* (1913:1), PSL, E 52.
129. *Report on the Working of the Central Museum, Lahore, for the Year 1916–1917* (1917:12), PSL, E 52.
130. *Report on the Working of the Central Museum, Lahore, for the Year 1919–1920* (1920:ii), PSL, E 52.
131. Ibid.
132. *Report on the Mayo School of Art in Report on the Progress of Education in the Punjab: during the quinquennium ending 1916–1917* (1917:39), OIOC V/24/939.
133. *Report on the Working of the Central Museum, Lahore, for the Year 1923–1924*, PSL, E 52.
134. This revisionism can be traced back to 1919 in annual reports.
135. Mentioned in *Report on the Working of the Central Museum, Lahore, for the Year 1928–1929*, OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048.
136. Officiated as curator for Lionel Heath in 1923–1925, who was deputed to England for the Wembley Exhibition 1924–1925. (*Report on the Working of the Central Museum, Lahore, for the Year 1923–1924* [1924], OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048.)
137. Ibid.
138. Ibid.
139. Reprinted the *Lahore Museum Bulletin*, Vol. VII, Nos. 1 and 2, January–December (1994:19–22).
140. Ibid.
141. In a confidential letter to W. R. Wilson (Revenue Secretary to Punjab Government) dated June 11, 1929. In File 58-C, 1930–1933, NCAA.
142. Ibid.
143. See *The Report of the Conference of Orientalists Including Museums and Archaeology Held in Simla* (1911:34), PSL.
144. Ibid.
145. I am not suggesting total absorption of Indians into the colonial mode of thinking and acting, but little refutation appeared to museum techniques by trainees; in effect, this Indian class actively embraced the mould provided by colonial museum practice.
146. Ibid.; for example, Natural History was moved to Government College, Lahore, and remains in its Department of Zoology's Natural History Museum.
147. *Report on the Working of the Central Museum, Lahore, for the Year 1928–1929* (1924), OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048.

148. The prefix of 'modern' increasingly appears in museum reports, indicating a marked shift from earlier modes of practice.
149. In a letter to W. R. Wilson, letter number 393 dated February 18, 1930–1933. In File 58-C, 1930–1933, NCAA.
150. Ibid.
151. In a letter to W. R. Wilson, letter number 1701 dated July 29, 1930. In File 58-C, 1930–1933, NCAA.
152. Ibid.
153. *Report on the Working of the Central Museum, Lahore, for the Year 1934–1935* (1935), OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048.
154. *Report on the Working of the Central Museum, Lahore, for the Year 1935–1936* (1936), OIOC V/24/3047 V/24/3048.

CHAPTER 2

1. Dr. Dar also set up the first Provincial Department of Archaeology in Punjab, becoming its first Director General. Most Pakistani museums are controlled/funded by the Archaeological Directorate at the federal level, but the Lahore Museum, even as an autonomous institution, receives government funds from the Department of Archaeology, Punjab.
2. I employ *postcolonial* throughout this chapter to mean the change in political status of a colony after gaining Independence, i.e., national.
3. F. E. S. Kaplan (1996) investigates Nigerian museums, A. L. Kaeppeler (1996) explores a variety of Pacific museums/cultural centres, and Morales-Moreno (1996) discusses the National Museum, Mexico. Within South Asia, for development of the National Museum, New Delhi, see Tapati Guha-Thakurta (1997b) and Kristy Phillips (2007).
4. This nationalistic strategy began in the nineteenth century, when museums/exhibitions became political symbols. See Tony Bennett (1995) for modern Europe and Peter Hoffenberg (2001) on exhibitions in Europe, India, and Australia in displaying empire.
5. Naqvi (1970:2).
6. I use the term *colonial museum(s)* to refer to present-day museums with origins in colonial activity, such as the Lahore Museum and others in South Asia—Prince of Wales, Mumbai, and Indian Museum, Kolkata.
7. Often the first reaction of academics when I related my intention to study South Asian colonial museums.
8. Prominent 'national' museums constructed in postcolonial South Asia include National Museum, New Delhi (1949), National

Museum of Pakistan, Karachi (1950), National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (*Lok Virsa*), Islamabad (1974), and National Handicrafts and Handlooms Museum, New Delhi (1956).

9. Guha-Thakurta (1997b) examines use of colonial archaeological collections for *Exhibition of Art Chiefly from the Dominions of India and Pakistan* in 1947 at Royal Academy of Arts, London, followed by the exhibition at Government House in New Delhi—*Masterpieces of Indian Art* (1948), allegorising history and nationhood. Also Martin Prösler (1996) investigates nationalist re-ordering at the National Museum, Colombo.
10. Recent publications on Pakistan's extremist-military-religio-political wranglings see Owen Bennett Jones (2009), Hilary Synnott (2009), and Zahid Hussain (2007). For an Indian perspective, see S. K. Datta and Sharma (2003) and Ashutosh Misra (2008). In relation to the Lahore Museum, see Shaila Bhatti (2010).
11. Such as RSS, Arya Samaj, Akali Movement, All India Muslim League, and with time the Indian National Congress, despite espousing secularism, favoured Hindu communities.
12. See Partha Chatterjee (1993).
13. Legislation such as the Morley-Minto Reform of 1909, Montague-Chelmsford Reform of 1919, and the Government of India Act of 1935 all reinforced regional particularisms (see Jalal 1995).
14. Both the provinces under division had majority Muslim populations: Punjab 57% and Bengal 55% (Jalal 1995).
15. Interestingly, Gandhi bestowed Jinnah this title.
16. For biographical accounts on Jinnah, see Akbar Ahmed (1997), Ayesha Jalal (1985), Jaswant Singh (2009), and Prakash Almeida (2001), who discusses the interrelationships among Jinnah, Gandhi, and Nehru.
17. See Partha Chatterjee (1993), Ian Talbot (2000), and Ayesha Jalal (1985, 1995).
18. Outside politics, the Muslim community's interests as a minority and their modernisation were highlighted by the reform ideals of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817–1898) and his Aligarh educational movement in the United Provinces. Sir Syed is revered for espousing the 'two nation' theory after criticising Congress and noting the incompatibility of the North Indian Muslim elite and the Bengali *babus* (see Talbot 2000).
19. Jinnah acted as B. G. Tilak's barrister in his 1908 and 1916 cases for seditious writing (Almeida 2001).
20. Quoted in Almeida (2001:53).
21. See Pinney (2004) for chromolithographs of the Cow Protection Movement and other nationalist imagery.

22. For example, B. G. Tilak's revival of the *Ganapati* festival in 1894 (see Raminder Kaur 1998) and the revival of the Maratha hero Shivaji as a symbol of militant nationalism in Maharashtra, the latter being associated with anti-Muslim sentiments. Elements of communalism also underscored the Hindi/Urdu controversy with the slogan: 'Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan' and the Cow Protection Movement (*Gauraksha Andolan*) in the 1880s and 1890s. (Talbot [2000] gives other examples of Hindu revival.)
23. The migration from Mecca to Medina of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his followers leading to the formation of the first Muslim community.
24. In Pakistan, Muhammad Iqbal is known as *Allama Iqbal* and has the status of National Poet; during the Raj, he was known as the 'Poet of the East.' Iqbal joined the London branch of the AIML in 1908 while studying law and philosophy in England.
25. Quoted in Ahmed (1979:54).
26. Although Iqbal was not in favour of a theocracy since religion was an individual pursuit, he did position the individual as part of a cohesive Islamic community.
27. In this respect, Jinnah differed with Gandhi: both wanted independence with unity between Hindu-Muslim communities, but the former was a staunch constitutionalist and the latter employed mass noncooperation movements to gain *Swaraj*.
28. The main obstacle was the Muslim ask for one-third representation in future government and the Nehru Report offering one-quarter; and so the report was taken as a Hindu document opposing Indian Muslims' needs.
29. Jinnah at Lahore in March 1936 (quoted in Almeida [2001:249]).
30. Bengal and Punjab were not interested in central power but vied for provincial autonomy; the AIML demand in the Lahore Resolution was for 'the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India . . . be grouped to constitute "Independent States" . . . [that] shall be autonomous and sovereign' (quoted in C. M. Naim [Ed.] [1979:208]).
31. Letter dated January 1, 1940 (Qureshi 1976:9–10).
32. Quoted in Akhtar (1945:80).
33. Presidential Address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on August 11, 1947 (quoted in *Quaid-i-Azam Mahomed Ali Jinnah: Speeches as Governor General of Pakistan 1947–1948* [n.d.]).
34. In his August 11, 1947 address, Jinnah stated: 'Even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis . . . among the Hindus you have Brahmins, Vaishnavas, Khatri, also Bengalese, Madrasis, and soon—will vanish' (quoted in Qureshi 1979:34).

35. West Pakistan had four provinces constituting present-day Pakistan and East Pakistan—former East Bengal, which in 1971 became Bangladesh.
36. Ayesha Jalal's (1995) *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia* analyses the historical and economic factors leading to conflict between state and society in Pakistan.
37. Jinnah attempted to create a pan-Pakistani identity through language: 'Let me make it very clear to you that the State language of Pakistan is going to be Urdu and no other language. Without one state language, no nation can remain tied up solidly together'; address at a Public Meeting in Dacca on March 21, 1948 (quoted in Qureshi 1976:96).
38. Farewell message to East Pakistan, broadcast from Radio Pakistan, Dacca, on March 28, 1948 (quoted in *Quaid-i-Azam Mahomed Ali Jinnah: Speeches as Governor General of Pakistan 1947–1948* [n.d.:104]).
39. Termed *Punjabisation* of Pakistani society/politics. Punjab has approximately 56.1% of the population (74 million, 1998) and is an important agricultural and industrial region, but it holds disproportionate power in the state and the military (see Talbot 1998).
40. *Muhajirs* are the Urdu-speaking refugees from the United Provinces who settled in the Sindh during Partition.
41. See Murphy-McGill (1996) for ethnography of such negotiations in contemporary Lahore.
42. Talbot (2000) briefly examines Pakistan State Television (PTV).
43. Pakistan's majority population is Muslim (approximately 96.3%—more than 75% Sunni, 20% Shi'a, rest are smaller sects. Other religious groups include Christians [2.5%] and Hindus, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, and Animists in the tribal Northern Areas [1.2%]).
44. Tariq Rahman (1996, 1999) explores the politicisation of language in Pakistan.
45. The pre-Partition coalition of Muslim provinces—Sindh, NWFP, Punjab, Bengal, and Baluchistan—had lent support hoping to negotiate a constitutional arrangement of strong provinces and a weak centre.
46. See, for example, *The Cultural Policy of Pakistan* (1995); revised under Benazir Bhutto's government, it narrates Pakistan's history along these lines.
47. See Ayesha Jalal (1985) and Hamza Alavi (1988), who problematise these ideological misconceptions of Pakistan's history.
48. 'Imagined community' from Benedict Anderson (1991) is used following Homi Bhabha (1994) and Partha Chatterjee's (1993)

critical readings, which question Anderson's division of imagining into messianic and homogenous empty time; Bhabha (1994) notes that nationalism and the nation have to be understood as part of cultural systems that preceded it and out of, as well as against, which they come into being: 'The "meanwhile" is the sign of the processual and performative, not a simple present continuous, but the present as succession without synchrony' (ibid.:159).

49. Kureshi served for twenty-seven years (1968–1995) on the museum's Advisory Committee.
50. Fabri (1899–1968) visited India for the first time in 1931 on an archaeological expedition with Sir Aurel Stein and in 1934 returned at Rabindranath Tagore's request to teach art history at Santiniketan and became involved with the Archaeological Survey of India. After 1948, Fabri was involved in writing, lecturing (at the National Museum of India, Delhi, during 1949–1950), and broadcasting on art and drama.
51. Interview, January 10, 2003.
52. Interview, August 2, 2003.
53. Kureshi (1994:1).
54. 'Regular' does not mean fortnightly or so; consistent visiting in South Asia can be once or twice a year. Ejaz Ali stated that he had been eighteen or nineteen times.
55. I would like to thank Ejaz Ali for presenting me with some objects from his collections.
56. Conversation with Ejaz Ali October 30, 2002.
57. Eighth Class is for 12/13-year-olds and tenth for 14/15-year-olds.
58. Conversation with Ejaz Ali October 30, 2002.
59. Ibid.
60. See Christopher King's (1994) *One Language, Two Scripts: The Hindi Movement in Nineteenth-century North India* for an examination of a similar process in the politicisation of language in the Hindi-Urdu controversy.
61. Meeting with Mrs. Nusrat Ali, September 17, 2002.
62. For debates surrounding Partition, see *The Partition of the Punjab 1947: A Compilation of Official Documents Volume I–IV* (1983).
63. In *The Partition of the Punjab 1947: A Compilation of Official Documents Volume I–IV* (1983).
64. The Pakistani side is known as Wagah and Indian as Attari. Richard Murphy McGill (2001) analyses the daily nationalist performances of flag raising and lowering at the border.
65. Like its museum, Lahore was, and remains, a palimpsest of historical and cultural inscriptions with different communities inhabiting and feeling possessive toward it. According to the Hindu epic

Ramayana, Lahore was founded by Loh, one of the sons of Ram; a small temple in the Lahore Fort's grounds is said to be Loh's Temple. For Muslims the Mughal heritage represents the height of Muslim civilisation and culture, and for Sikhs it was the capital of Maharajah Ranjit Singh's Kingdom, with the province containing many Sikh pilgrimage sites—particularly, Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism.

66. This political dimension/threat to the Lahore Museum is still in evidence today. I was told by Mrs. Zarina Khurshid (Keeper of Ethnological Collections) of how the museum was closed briefly in 1992 following the Babri Mosque destruction in Ayodhya on December 6 by Hindu activists (*karsevaks* of BJP/RSS/VHP heady mix), and counter-attacks occurred in Lahore, where mobs targeting disused Hindu/Jain temples could also have perceived the museum's Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist collections as anti-Islamic.
67. *Report on the Working of the Lahore Museum for the Year 1919–1920* (1920:1), PSL.
68. Only two documents exist in the museum that partially record the division of objects: first, a list of 237 objects—including pieces of Gandhara, textiles, utensils, and articles of furniture—that, according to Dr. Rehmani, was related to object distribution; second, Miss Humera Alam (Keeper of Pre-Islamic Collections), told of a list compiled by Dr. Elizabeth Errington (Coins and Medals Department, British Museum) on the Gandhara collection at Chandigarh's museum that correlates register entries of objects sent and received.
69. According to Dr. Dar (August 2, 2003), the 40% did not include coins, which were supposed to be exchanged for items in return, which never occurred.
70. Such sentiments are alluded to briefly by Dar (1977).
71. See www.chdmuseum.nic.in/ (accessed January 19, 2012).
72. Le Corbusier (1887–1965) is responsible for designing Chandigarh and many of its official buildings, including High Court Building (1950–1963), Chandigarh Assembly (1955), Chandigarh Arts School (1959), and Boating Club; other buildings in India include Ahmedabad's museum (1953–1957).
73. See www.chdmuseum.nic.in/ (accessed January 19, 2012).
74. (1994:1).
75. Mentioned by B. A. Kureshi (1994:1); no other information given.
76. Interview, August 2, 2003.
77. At the time of my research, the Director was Dr. Liaquat Ali Khan Niazi, who joined in mid-2001.
78. Director's speech at the Quiz Show: *History and Collections of the Lahore Museum* (Lahore Museum, January 11, 2003).

79. Interview, November 19, 2002.
80. Term used for museum officers ranked below keepers.
81. Interview, April 8, 2003.
82. Interview, April 8, 2003.
83. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1942–1943* (1943), OIOC V/24/3048.
84. Size of the collection is unclear, but Anjum Rehmani (1994) notes that the previous Islamic collection formed in 1910–1911 was confined to a single showcase.
85. *The Working Report on the Museum for the Years 1968–1969* (quoted in Rehmani [1994:137]). For a detailed description of the Islamic Gallery, see Rehmani (1994).
86. An *International Exhibition of Muslim Art and Culture* (1957–1958) was held in the Fort, Lahore, as part of the International Islamic Colloquium. An *Exhibition of Muslim Art and Architecture* (1965) also took place later in Karachi.
87. Interview and Gallery tour, November 7, 2002.
88. The majority of labels in the gallery, as elsewhere in the Lahore Museum, bear only a generic date referring to a century.
89. This refurbishment slots into a general move in mid-1960s and early-1970s Pakistan, when museums were extended and some built. The only comprehensive list of Pakistani museums up to 1989 is a pamphlet by Dr. Dar (1989).
90. In relation to cinema see Mushtaq Gazdar (1997).
91. This transfer took place under the West Pakistan Government Educational and Training Institutions Ordinance of 1960 (Kureshi 1994:4). Previously, administration had oscillated between the Director of Education, Lahore and the Education Department, Punjab Government.
92. Interview, June 7, 2003. Rehmani informed that a first floor was added to part of the museum under B. A. Kureshi's chairmanship.
93. This chaptering of the gallery took place during Dr. Rehmani's Directorship (1998–2001).
94. History is similarly narrated and illustrated in school textbooks.
95. Interview, November 19, 1996.
96. My gratitude to Fouzia Kanwal (APRO II) for her patience and help in translating the text.
97. Sadequain (1930–1987) was one of Pakistan's distinctive modern painters, who is especially remembered for his public murals, including at Karachi Airport (1957), Head Office of State Bank, Karachi and Mangla Mural (1962). In 1967, he painted four murals for buildings in Lahore: two for the Punjab University Auditorium, one for University Library, and one for Punjab Public

Library. Between 1969 and 1985, Sadequain lived and worked in Lahore and also donated some of his earlier figural paintings to the museum.

98. Jamal Malik (1996) examines the relationship that various religious groups and factions have with the Pakistan Government.
99. See Anita Weiss (1993) for an account on the transformation of the women's movement during Zia's rule.
100. The imposition of an Islamic 'code' for artistic representation centres on the prohibition of figural/facial representation, which during Zia's regime essentially meant that art became calligraphy. For a cogent exposition on the figural in Islam, with reference to the Bamiyan Buddha, see Barry Flood (2002); and for representations of the female figure in Pakistani popular culture, see Farida Batool (2004).
101. Today the museum holds around 1,500 manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Punjabi, Pushto, Sindhi, and Turkish.
102. Interview, November 11, 2003.
103. Both the Contemporary Crafts Gallery and the Stamps Gallery are considerably smaller than those on the lower floor of the museum.
104. The collection/display of coins can be traced to the colonial era but was recently redisplayed in 2002.
105. See Shaila Bhatti (2010).
106. Benazir Bhutto's second government (1993–1996) instigated a popular Islamist basis for Pakistan, promoting its origins in the Indus Civilisation, and led to the National Commission on History and Culture publishing *The Indus Saga and the Making of Pakistan* (1996) by Aitzaz Ahsan (Benazir's Interior Minister during her first term).
107. Pakistan has had almost twenty-four years under military bureaucracy, the most recent being President Musharraf's (2001–2008) administration.
108. Interview, January 10, 2003.
109. Islamic Gallery, Independence Movement Gallery, Contemporary Paintings Gallery, Contemporary Craft Gallery, Stamps Gallery, Islamic Manuscripts Gallery, Coins Gallery, Ethnological Gallery III.
110. Meeting with Mrs. Nusrat Ali, September 9, 2002.
111. Despite the transnational flows (Appadurai 1996) of information and images via multimedia and the Internet, there remains a lack of exchange on cultural/research information, including the museum's displaced artefacts, in contemporary South Asia, with a sharp deterioration of Indo-Pak relations following the Mumbai blasts (November 26, 2008).

CHAPTER 3

1. Refers to ‘archons’ as guardians of official archives, as used by Jacques Derrida (1996:2).
2. Interview, January 7, 2003.
3. Durrans’s (1988) ‘basic model’ refers to the modern museum as it developed in Europe from its classical antecedents.
4. Saloni Mathur (2005) assesses New Museology and museums in the new era of globalisation and calls for redefinition of perspective and practice.
5. Corrine Kratz (2002) provides an example of this when dealing with institutional rules and sponsorship demands in setting up a photographic exhibition in Kenya.
6. The difficulty of analysing transformation from colonial to postcolonial representation in Indian museums first presented itself when I tried to trace the transformation for my Master’s thesis (Bhatti 1999).
7. There have been incidents in which postcolonial reflexivity has led to controversy—such as Jean Cannizzo and *Into the Heart of Darkness* exhibition (1989–1990); also see Henrietta Riegel (1996).
8. During this period, Dr. Dar worked at various museums including National Museum, Karachi, Moenjodaro Museum, Harrapa Museum, and Taxila (Interview, January 10, 2003).
9. Interview, January 10, 2003.
10. Set up in 1950 as an unofficial body to discuss museum issues related to museums, its first president was Dr. Mortimer Wheeler (Archaeological Adviser to the Government of Pakistan), and in April 1951, it started publishing *The Museums Journal: The Organ of the Museums Association of Pakistan*.
11. Annual Report of the Museum Association of Pakistan for the year 1950–1951, in *The Museums Journal: The Organ of the Museums Association of Pakistan*, Vol. II, Nos. 1–2, April–October 1951.
12. Interview, January 10, 2003.
13. Majority of papers presented are reprinted in *Museology and Museum Problems in Pakistan* (Ed.) S. R. Dar (1981).
14. Dr. Grace Morley was the first Director of the National Museum, New Delhi (1960–1966; see Kristy Phillips 2007). In 1967, she became the head of ICOM’s Regional Agency for South and South East Asia; previously, Dr. Morley was the first Director of San Francisco’s MOMA (1935–1960).
15. Interview, January 10, 2003.
16. With the help of Miss Humera Alam, a catalogue was published on this collection.

17. Dr. Anjum Rehmani's academic background is in history, Persian, and Urdu, with museological training from the Smithsonian Institute and in Islamic Arts from the Freer Gallery of Arts, Washington, the British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Museum for Islamic Art, Berlin.
18. The theft on June 29, 2001 was of five manuscripts from the Manuscripts and Calligraphy Gallery. However, in June 2003 the matter was resolved with no action, and Dr. Rehmani was reinstated as Deputy Director.
19. A glossy publication with close-up photographs of select objects from only eight collections with descriptions of each emphasising their value as art/antiquity of Pakistani heritage and history.
20. Interview, June 7, 2003.
21. Dr. Niazi was briefly preceded by another government official, Mr. Mansoor Sohail. His background was in Islamic law, and previously he was a member of the Judicial Punjab Election Authority and a Chief Instructor for the General Director of Civil Services Academy.
22. Interview, January 7, 2003.
23. This involved recruitment of extra security staff in the galleries, bag checks at the entrance, and CCTV installation funded by the Finance Department, Government of Punjab (Rs. 16,31,000).
24. Interview, January 7, 2003.
25. Interview, January 16, 2003.
26. Interview, June 7, 2003.
27. ICOM was created in 1946 as a NGO to deal with UNESCO's museums programmes. Today it works with museums and museum professionals globally (see www.icom.museum, accessed January 19, 2012).
28. These include Peace and Tolerance, Education, Poverty Alleviation, Preservation, and Gender Issues; interview at UNESCO–Islamabad, June 30, 2003. UNESCO's work is most visible at Pakistan's six World Heritage sites.
29. Interview, June 30, 2003.
30. The collaboration started in October 2002, between Government of Pakistan—Federal and Provincial levels and the UNDP, resulting in a conference in November 2003.
31. Only one of the nine Gallery In-Charges agreed that UNESCO affected the museum but was unable to elaborate; no one mentioned the cultural tourism project being planned.
32. Interview, November 20, 2002.
33. UNESCO does not provide direct funding to any project or institution; instead, it urges organisations to get involved with UNESCO

in fund-raising activities; interview with Mr. Ahmad, June 30, 2003.

34. Interview, March 4, 2003.
35. Ibid.
36. Interview, November 12, 2002.
37. Interview, January 10, 2003.
38. Interview, January 8, 2003.
39. *Museums and Art Galleries in Pakistan* (1989) lists fifty-six museums in Pakistan with nine either under construction or proposed.
40. Some private museums receive government maintenance grants; a prime example here is the Fakir Khana Museum, Lahore.
41. Dr. Dar was involved in setting up the Punjab branch and became its first Director General in 1987 for two years while on deputation from the Lahore Museum.
42. The Bahawalpur Museum opened in 1977, and its development was overseen by Dr. Dar, with some Lahore Museum staff advising on issues of display and galleries. The Kasur Museum, part of which includes the Shrine of Baba Dai Sahib, costing Rs. 4.5 million, with five galleries: Archaeological, Coins, Islamic, Pakistan Movement, and Crafts, was built between 1994 and 1999 in a building taken over by the Department of Archaeology. I would like to thank Messrs. M. Sarwar and M. Shehzad, who tend to the land around the Kasur Museum and acted as ad hoc guides when I visited; paucity of funds means there are no permanent staff.
43. Interview, January 8, 2003.
44. The Board of Governors, approved by the Governor of Punjab, holds tenure for three years and consists of government officials, the museum Director, academics, and cultural experts.
45. Interview, January 7, 2003.
46. Fakir Syed Aijazuddin, OBE, is a member of the prominent Fakir family of Lahore; a chartered accountant by profession, he is renowned for his interest in art, culture, and history. He has published extensively, including *Pahari Paintings and Sikh Portraits in the Lahore Museum* (1977), a work done in light of W. G. Archer's work on Punjab Hill paintings. His most recent publication is *Lahore Recollected: An Album* (2003).
47. Interview, June 3, 2003.
48. Interview, August 2, 2003.
49. Pakistan's budgetary spending is biased toward large defence; Ayesha Jalal (1995) notes how this trait was evident in the first year of Independence and subsequent budgets have essentially been defence budgets, leaving little for development in other areas, such as culture and education.

50. At the office of the Minister for Culture, Youth Affairs, Punjab, I enquired after the current cultural policy and was kindly handed a photocopy of *The Cultural Policy of Pakistan* from 1995—the first National Cultural Policy to be adopted in Pakistan constituted under Benazir Bhutto’s government—and it seems this is still being referred to with no update. There is no mention of museums or the role they can play in Pakistan’s cultural preservation and promotion, although setting up of Cultural Centres is advocated; the only commissioned gallery is the National Gallery of Paintings in Islamabad.
51. Mr. Ahmad (UNESCO) previously worked at the Ministry of Culture, Islamabad, where in 1994 he attempted to raise the profile of museums by initiating the National Fund for Cultural Heritage (www.heritage.gov.pk, accessed January 19, 2012); however, he was unsure if the project was still functioning or had stagnated.
52. At the Lahore Museum, three out of the seven senior posts (Keeper and Research Officers) were trained in archaeology at Peshawar University.
53. Interview, August 2, 2004.
54. Evidence of Pakistan’s bureaucratic Punjabisation (see Talbot 1998) within the museum context.
55. Interview, November 14, 2002.
56. Interview, November 20, 2002.
57. Interview, April 3, 2003.
58. Interview, November 11, 2002.
59. Interview, January 7, 2003.
60. Interview, November 12, 2002.
61. Interview, March 3, 2003.
62. Interview, November 7, 2003.
63. Interview, November 20, 2002.
64. In Pakistan, museology is usually taught as part of the Master’s of archaeology—the most renowned department being at Peshawar University. The Archaeology Department at Punjab University, Lahore, also offers museology for Master’s students teaching museum history (Western) and museum studies.
65. Such tasks usually involved supervising the cleaning of cases, although the first Monday of each month, when the museum was closed, was reserved as cleaning day. Otherwise, it could be fixing a display, opening cases for photography, or setting up a temporary exhibition.
66. Interview, November 7, 2003.
67. Interview, November 12, 2002.
68. See *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture* (Eds.) Karp, Kreamer, and Lavine (1992), although more often

it deals with reconciliation or acknowledgment of the Other—for example, First Nations; see also Moira Simpson (1996) in *Making Representations: Museums in the Post-Colonial Era* or James Clifford (1997) *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*.

69. Interview, March 3, 2003.
70. Interview, November 12, 2002.
71. Interview, January 7, 2003.
72. Literacy rate in 2008 for adults (15+ years old) was male 69% and female 40% (www.unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/socind/literacy.htm, accessed January 19, 2012).
73. Interview, November 11, 2002.
74. Interview, November 7, 2002.
75. These were the APRO (I) and (II) during my research in 2002–2003.
76. Delegations are usually foreign dignitaries, government officials, or those considered of VIP/VVIP status.
77. For some Gallery In-Charges it is a status issue; others were uncertain of role boundaries—but most did recognise that increased interaction with visitors, beyond answering ad hoc questions in galleries, was needed and blamed their work culture for limiting this.
78. Interview, November 19, 2002.
79. Interview, November 16, 2002.
80. In the visitor questionnaire/interviews I carried out at the Lahore Museum (see [Chapter 4](#) for details) only 20% of visitors knew a guide service was available; 20% responded that they would like to be guided; and the majority (76%) preferred to see the museum themselves—not for want of knowledge, but the main drawback was that with a guide they would have to follow the guide's pace, and this would disrupt group discussion and pleasure.
81. Korean and Japanese tourists continue to visit in large numbers; the decline is noticeable for American and European visitors.
82. The 'educated' label was unqualified by museum staff but usually referred to at least higher education with a general interest in history or the arts.
83. Interview, November 16, 2002.
84. Previously, Mr. F. S. Aijazuddin (BOG Lahore Museum) had arranged for local banks to sponsor similar pamphlets in black and white sold for Rs.1 (Urdu) and Rs. 2 (English).
85. The last guidebook published by the museum was in 1984 by Dr. Dar but is no longer in print.
86. The Pakistani Rupee currently fluctuates around Rs. 140 to 1 pound sterling. Although reasonably priced, if one considers that

there are 18 galleries, the cost along with ticket prices for a family (ranging from anything between 4 to 15) is economically unviable, since a lower-middle class monthly income is between Rs. 5,000 and 12,000 at the upper end.

87. In visitor questionnaire/interviews 93% of respondents were unaware of museum lectures or quiz programmes, and only 1% claimed to attend regularly.
88. These themes built on Dr. Niazi's interest in Islamic history and civilisation, which he applied to Pakistan's culture and representation in the museum.
89. Higher education institutes regularly participating included teams from Islamia College, Government College, University, Princeton Institute of Management Sciences, Geography/Persian/Law Departments from Punjab University, University of Engineering, Science and Technology, and Government College for Women.
90. A few inspired students returned and were planning to carry out projects involving the museum's collections and cataloguing its collections electronically.

CHAPTER 4

1. Visitor numbers collated by the museum show 324,978 visitors between July 2002 and August 2003, with 3,126 being foreigners.
2. Excludes school/college trips, unless a student was visiting on his or her own.
3. Several photographic 'hotspots' exist in the museum, such as the carved wooden doors in the General and Miniature Galleries. The life-size proportions attract visitors to physically embody them and use them as backdrops, similar to other heritage/tourist sites in Pakistan. See David MacDougall (1992) and Christopher Pinney (1997) for Indian photographic practices.
4. The museum is an opportune meeting place for courting couples; similar activity occurs in other museums; see Mark Elliot (2003) for the Indian Museum, Kolkata.
5. Paul Greenhalgh (1997) mentions similar fair-like atmosphere at nineteenth/twentieth-century exhibitions and world fairs.
6. See Christopher Pinney (2002a) for evocation of tactile vision applying Michael Taussig's critical rereading of Walter Benjamin in *Mimeses and Alterity*.
7. See Tapati Guha-Thakurta (2004) and Kavita Singh (2009), who refer to this immense popularity.
8. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1891–1892*, OIOC V/24/3047.

9. Annual reports on the Lahore Museum for 1887–1898, 1916–1917, 1923–1944. Unfortunately, there is no breakdown of these figures; although attendance on *Zenana Days* from 1912–1913 onward is available; OIOC V/24/3047, V/24/3048.
10. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1916–1917*, OIOC V/24/3048.
11. Quoted in the Victoria and Albert Museum's, Bombay, *Accession Book* (1946:155–56).
12. Increase in visitor numbers at museums during festivals is reported by other museums: E. A. D'Abreu comments on the popularity of the Central Museum in Nagpur during Dusshera (*Report on the Central Museum, Nagpur for the Year 1922–1925*); likewise, the highest attendance at the Lucknow Provincial Museum was during *Kurttik Purnima*, going beyond ten thousand (*Annual Report on the Working of the Lucknow Provincial Museum for the Year Ending March 31, 1935*).
13. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1895–1896*, OIOC V/24/3047.
14. Exhibitions operated similarly as evident in the Honourable Mr. Drummond's (Lieutenant-Governor of the North Western Provinces) opening remarks at the Provincial Exhibition in Agra of 1866: 'Last, but not least, among the objects of the Exhibition is that of promoting cordiality of feeling and friendly association with one another, of all the numerous classes, European and Native, whom I hoped to attract, and whom I am delighted to see so well represented around me this day.' *General Report of the North West Provinces Exhibition* (1868), LML.
15. Gyan Prakash (1999) mentions the allure of mesmerism and magic for the Indian public.
16. Quoted in Prakash (1999:31) (italics in the original).
17. *Report of Nagpore Exhibition of Arts, Manufactures and Produce*, December (1865:27) (Home Department Proceedings for the General Department, Proceeding September 8, 1866, No. 98–100, PSL).
18. Punjab wood carving in *Journal of Indian Art and Industry* (1883), Vol. 1:4:1–3.
19. *Report of Nagpore Exhibition of Arts, Manufactures and Produce*, December (1865:23–24) (Home Department Proceedings for the General Department, Proceeding September 8, 1866, No. 98–100, PSA).
20. *Ibid.* (1865:9).
21. *Annual Report of the Indian Museum 1903–1904: Industrial Section* (1904), LML.

22. *Annual Report on the Working of the Lucknow Provincial Museum for the Year Ending March 31, 1934*, LML.
23. *Annual Report for the Year 1940–1941 for the Watson Museum: Rajkot* (1942), LML.
24. Such curiosities are still highlighted in South Asian museums; a flexible sandstone is exhibited in the Economic Section of the Indian Museum, Kolkata.
25. Rare or unique objects were also collected and sent to the Nara Ratna Mandir's museum in Indore, where in 1940 tiger foeti and a stone bearing a natural tree design were presented (*Annual Report on the Working of the Museum and Nara Ratna Mandir, Indore for the Year 1940*, LML).
26. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1922–1923* (1923) (OIOC V/24/3048) contains a note on the popularity of the Lahore Museum and zoo—which maintained attendance at over half a million during 1922–1923.
27. Markham and Hargreaves (1936:61).
28. Markham and Hargreaves (1936) linked the low literacy rates—1 in 10—with the slow growth of museums in India (in 1935, numbered 105).
29. For a similar experience by Egyptian visitors at a Paris exhibition, see Timothy Mitchell (1988).
30. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1923–1924* (1924), OIOC V/24/3048.
31. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1925–1926* (1926), OIOC V/24/3480.
32. *The Report on the Lahore Central Museum for the Year 1942–1943* (1943), OIOC V/24/3480.
33. Markham and Hargreaves (1936:61).
34. Interview, November 11, 2002.
35. Interview, November 19, 2002.
36. A photographic exhibition on Lahore (March 27–April 13, 2002).
37. Interview, November 12, 2001.
38. Known as Defence Housing Association (DHA), it is one of the fastest expanding modern residential areas for upper-middle and higher classes.
39. In Lahore, this separation of social and cultural worlds is physically mapped out and split by the Bari Doab Canal—northward are the older parts of Lahore and southward the more affluent areas; see Murphy McGill (1996).
40. Few sociological or anthropological studies on class exist but in relation to the preference for English among the upper classes (see

- Tariq Rahman [1996, 1999] and Ian Talbot [1998] on the rise of Urdu among the young elite).
41. Interview, November 7, 2002.
 42. Interview, November 1, 2003.
 43. Interview, March 4, 2003.
 44. Fouzia Kanvil (interview, November 16, 2002) suggested that nude sculptures conflicted with social mores on what is appropriate for viewing within a family setting.
 45. Interview, November 14, 2002.
 46. Interview, November 11, 2002.
 47. Interview, January 7, 2003.
 48. Interview, January 10, 2003.
 49. Gallery attendants were often approached and asked if they felt scared working in a place like this, while other questions enquired: 'What is this?' 'Who made this?' 'When was it found?' 'Is it really old or just a copy?'
 50. See Savia Viegas (2001), where she offers an insight into the ordinary visitors at the Prince of Wales Museum, Mumbai.
 51. Hooper-Greenhill (2000:1).
 52. Bourdieu and Darbel (1991) also employed the survey method in their analysis of European art museums.
 53. Merriman's (1989b) conclusions were based on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* (1996:170), but he glosses over any idiosyncrasies.
 54. Although museum anthropologists are lagging by confining themselves to representational concerns and not producing ethnographies of museum cultures.
 55. See Beverley Butler (2001) on reconstruction debates at the Alexandria Museum, Egypt.
 56. I apply this term in a similar way to Arjun Appadurai's (1996) use in relation to the vernacularisation of cricket in India, examining the extent to which the museum has been made local/South Asian.
 57. On French society and in the context of European art museums, see Bourdieu and Darbel (1991).
 58. This dilemma presented itself to Euro-American museums in the nineteenth century, when they became public museums (later exhibitions, too); see Bennett (1995).
 59. For example, Clifford (1997), Karp, Kreamer, and Lavine (1992), Simpson (1996), and Pierson-Jones (1992).
 60. The following visitor data are based on responses from 100 questionnaires carried out during April/May 2003 at the Lahore Museum. However, these questionnaires were more like interviews, taking on average around 45 minutes, and were filled in

by me (except one); I was aided by a research assistant—Ayesha Farooq—who asked initial questions. In the 100 questionnaires, the respondents had a 49:51 male:female ratio, with the age range 15–61+ years old. I constructed a questionnaire based mainly on open-ended questions, to gain insight into public opinion and interpretation and to locate future informants rather than statistical values.

61. 88% of people questioned came as part of a group; Appadurai and Breckenridge (1992) also note visiting as a group in India.
62. A stigma persists around women, especially unmarried, visiting public places on their own.
63. See John Falk (2009), who examines such group discussion within and beyond the museum in the U.S. context.
64. Equal numbers of visitors questioned: 43 stated that either they themselves or family suggested coming to the museum, while 10 said that friends choose, and 4 got the ideas from school.
65. 63% identified family/friends as the first place where they heard about the Lahore Museum, 36% stated other sources such as school, and 1% by chance or 'just knew.'
66. Islamia Town is about an hour's bus ride from Lahore. Sumera, probably about 13, earned around Rs. 1,500–2,000 per month for each household.
67. Interview, September 12, 2002.
68. For 52%, it was their first visit; the remaining 48% were returning, out of which 37% claimed it was at least their third visit.
69. 42 years old: ran a private school in Kamoki, a town lying north of Lahore City (April 19, 2003).
70. 55% had visited only the Lahore Museum; 31% had visited Taxila, Harrapa, or National Museum, Karachi; and 6% visited museums in the Gulf States—Kuwait, Bahrain—while working as economic migrants.
71. Visitors from Lahore comprised 46% from lower-middle/middle-class areas such as Mozang, Shadbagh, Krishanagar, Anarkali, Walton to upper-class areas of Garden Town, and Defence; 53% came from other places in Punjab, such as Chinot, Faisalabad, Sheikhpura, Narowal, and Multan; and 8% from cities in other provinces—Karachi or Hyderabad in Sindh or Leepa in Azad Kashmir; only 1% came from abroad—England.
72. 80% attended Government Urdu medium schools; 18% English medium (private or government) or convent schools; and 2% village schools.
73. 28% were matriculation pass, 11% F. A. (intermediate), 28% B. A., and 11% held Master's degrees, with 1% studying for A levels.

74. 82% lived in owner-occupied and 18% in rented accommodation.
75. A cooling system where air passes through an internal water stream.
76. 100% had fans, 68% cooler, 71% radio, 89% fridge, 89% television, 36% cable, 40% motorbike, 27% car (shared in joint family), 18% air conditioner, and 2% satellite.
77. Rachel Dwyer (2000, especially [Chapter 3](#)) states that the concept of middle class needs to be examined in relation to the specific historical and economic changes in South Asia.
78. This class aspires to upper-class status not through education or inherited capital but increased wealth and conspicuous consumption resulting from migratory work remittances or new money.
79. 35 years old: worked in Pakistan State Bank (April 20, 2003).
80. Interview, August 1, 2003.
81. Interview, July 13, 2003.
82. 39% of respondents stated they came to see history, 33% for recreation, 12% for general interest, 9% for culture, and 7% for general knowledge.
83. 25 years old: housewife from Sheikhpura (May 7, 2003).
84. The museum reminded some of old schools in horror movies, bazaars, shopping plazas, or science laboratories.
85. Interview, August 8, 2003.
86. Interview, August 14, 2003.
87. Interview, July 8, 2003.
88. 17 years old: visiting with her mother from Peshawar (May 9, 2003).
89. 28 years old: garments shop owner accompanied by his niece while vacationing in Lahore (April 20, 2003).
90. 40 years old: television repairer (May 8, 2003).
91. 30 years old: housewife (March 3, 2004); the marriage model Rukhsana referred to was actually of a Muharram procession.
92. A number of objects were said to exhibit nudity, such as a brass Jain Mahavira and a seminaked wooden sculpture of a woman with child in the Hindu/Jaina/Buddhist Gallery.
93. Galleries were called *kamray* ('rooms') or halls by some visitors.
94. 15% preferred the Islamic Gallery, 12% both Contemporary Paintings and Ethnological II, 8% General, 18% claimed no specific favourite, with 8% saying 'all.'
95. I apply Greenblatt's (1991) terms not as museological display praxis but as ways of viewing and experiencing displays.
96. By 'literal,' I mean objects still used/present in society. Those objects that have a more free-flowing association are given allegorical meanings and are imaginatively personalised.

97. Although the Swat Gallery and the Independence Movement Gallery display in-depth labels/panels, their size and length prevent active consumption.
98. 38 years old: teacher (May 3, 2003).
99. 54 years old: housewife (May 28, 2003).
100. Bachelard's 'resonance' is an understanding through connections with other feelings/echoes, and, by contrast, reverberation brings about a change in being; together they evoke the uncanny (in Françoise Lionnet [2001]).
101. 28 years old: visiting a friend at a university in Lahore (May 2, 2003).
102. *Khandani* refers to a traditional joint family household system with its shared aspects of domestic life.
103. 26 years old: *zamindar* (land owner) (May 9, 2003).
104. Similar to Françoise Lionnet's (2001) analysis of a fictional encounter when Idris visits a sub-Saharan museum: 'Idris opened his eyes wide. All these objects, of unreal cleanliness, frozen in their eternal essences, intangible, mummified, had surrounded his childhood and adolescence. Less than forty-eight hours before, he had eaten from that dish, watched his mother using that grinder' (ibid.:50).
105. 23 years old: Master's student (April 26, 2003).
106. Akin to the enchantment described by Alfred Gell (1999).
107. Interview, September 15, 2003.
108. 16 years old: embroiderer and seamstress (May 9, 2003).
109. 28 years old: social worker.
110. 19 years old: B.A. student.
111. Interview, September 15, 2003.
112. Interview, August 14, 2003.
113. Interview, August 1, 2003.
114. In fact, there was no poison; this was labelled to deter visitors from touching the pot.
115. 40 years old: currently unemployed but previously worked in a jute mill and been a rickshaw driver, April 26, 2003.
116. 42 years old: owns an imitation jewellery stall in Lahore's Liberty Market.
117. 43 years old: *zamindar* and export businessman from Multan (May 3, 2003).
118. 42 years old: worked for Pakistan Steel as an engineer and now is a jeweller (May 3, 2003).
119. Interview, August 14, 2003.
120. Ibid.
121. Ibid.

122. Caste groups such as Jats, Rajputs, Arains, and so on are not a religious hierarchical system in Pakistani society but cultural identifications binding social groups together and are essential for some in marital negotiations or in creating political allegiances.
123. Interview, July 13, 2003.
124. Interview, August 1, 2003. The Islamic festival of *Eid* includes both *Eid-ul-fitr*, which celebrates the end of Ramadan, and *Eid-ul-Adha*, which marks the end of the Hajj pilgrimage. *12 Rabil-al-auwal* marks the birth and death anniversary of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). *Basant* is a popular festival that signals the onset of spring and was celebrated in much of Punjab by the flying of brightly coloured kites and the profusion of the colour yellow in dress and decoration that is embellished into feasting and dancing (see McGill [2001] for a discussion of *basant* in Lahore and the imagining of authentic culture). However, *basant* festivities have been prohibited since 2006 by the Punjab Government, which cited a mixture of safety, moral, and religious reasons.
125. Interview, August 1, 2003.
126. This is a romantic seventeenth-century folklore tale from the Gujarat region of Punjab that is retold in poetic prose, plays, and songs or can be viewed as a movie.
127. Interview, June 3, 2003.

CHAPTER 5

1. *Nokta Nazar* in Urdu translates as ‘one’s own way of seeing,’ or subjective point of view.
2. *Indian Museums* (1914:34). In the JIAI Vol. 16:125:33–69. Thomas Holbein Hendley was a member of the Royal and Bengal Asiatic Societies, Residency Surgeon and Honorary Secretary, and Curator of the Jeypore Museum and Chairman for several exhibition committees.
3. *Ajaib Ghar* is used generically rather than referring to the Lahore Museum.
4. Hendley indicates that he is using Arabic words.
5. Quoted in Hendley (1914:34, n.2).
6. Hendley suggests that the Greek museum has been transferred to ‘gardens’ in India—as a place of dialogue/debate and exchange of ideas (1914:34, n.4). He refers extensively to David Murray’s (1904) *Museums, Their History and Their Use; with Bibliography and List of Museums in the United Kingdom*, who cites European museums that continued employing curiosity as a display strategy, such as Green Vaults, Dresden. Alma S. Wittlin’s (1949) *The*

Museum: Its History and Its Tasks in Education, especially Part I, Section III, offers a similar discussion.

7. Stephen Bann's (1995) *Shrines, Curiosities, and the Rhetoric of Display* examines the spectacle of pre-Renaissance displays at European pilgrimage sites and cathedrals as pre-cursors to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century cabinets of curiosity.
8. Hendley (1914:39).
9. Hendley (1914:39).
10. The Museum of Indology is a privately run museum established in 1960 by Acharya Ram Charan Sharma 'Vyakul' and has eighteen sections of folk and tantric art collections.
11. Quoted in Brosius and Butcher (1999:18); originally from Roland Robertson (1994).
12. In the Comments Book of a temporary exhibition on Lahore, March 27–April 13, 2002. Khalid Zubair was not alone; other members of the public also mentioned 'watching' the museum.
13. The hypodermic model concentrated primarily on the text, which was assumed to dupe the passive audience/reader and was concerned with behaviourist effects of 'uses and gratifications' as theorised by the Frankfurt School (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998; Ang 1996; Morley 1995).
14. Morley's (1992) use of 'ethnography' revealed a variety of interpretations in relation to social and cultural contexts of viewing but has been criticised for its 'applied methodology' (Ang 1996). Also see Roger Silverstone's (1994) *Television and Everyday Life*.
15. James Curran (1996) and Ien Ang (1996) are wary of liberal audience empowerment that reduce the text to a passive position, as in the work of Michel De Certeau (1984) and John Fiske (1989) on popular culture consumption.
16. Ang (1996:67); Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998:121–57) also consider the interrelationship between different media within society.
17. For example, Fyfe and Ross (1996) explore various exhibit 'readings' made by residents in a conurbation of Midlands, UK; Worts (1995) investigates 'visitor creativity' and personal meanings when viewing art by using 'share your reaction' cards; Falk and Dierking (1992) forward their 'Interactive Experience Model,' which tracks the total museum visiting experience from initial thoughts to actual visit and recollections but disappointingly reduces them to patterns/structures of behaviour. This research is expanded in Falk (2009), and Radley (1991) tries to capture the 'bodily experience'/praxis of exhibits that provide moments of reconstitution or discontinuity.

18. See Karp, Kreamer, and Lavine (1992); Clifford 1997; Simpson (1996).
19. It is common to see individuals touch the feet of and look up at a statue depicting a god/goddess as they pass through galleries in Indian museums. I witnessed this at the Prince of Wales Museum, Mumbai, and the Indian Museum, Kolkata (see Elliott 2003). One day I did see a garland of flowers, most likely from *Data Sahib's* shrine in Lahore, placed around a carved image of Ganesh on an exhibit of a wooden door in the Lahore Museum.
20. Pakistanis are aware of/use the word *darshan*, but generically to suggest intentionality in seeing someone or something, as if fulfilling a visual wish or desire. Chris Pinney (pers. comm.) informed me that Muslims in India also invoke *darshan* when visiting saints' shrines.
21. For discussion of chromolithographs of Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru, Bhagat Singh, and other nationalists in colonial and postcolonial India, see Chris Pinney (2004), particularly Chapters 6 and 7.
22. See Pinney (2002a).
23. Kakar (1978:30–31) quoted in Sylvian Pinard (1991), *A Taste of India: On the Role of Gustation in the Hindu Sensorium*.
24. Freitag also looks at *darshan* and *bhakti*, as well as live performances and modern-day media in determining the public sphere in India—past and present.
25. Pandya (1998) shows how visitors expect to see and be shown the intricately decorated interiors of houses, thereby creating and maintaining social bonds.
26. Similar practice is carried out with a salt mineral called *phatkari*, which on contact with heat is said to transform into the face of the accused. Other preventative measures include giving *sadka*—a type of alms given in the name of Allah on a weekly or as-required basis. A popular *sadka* involves disposal of meat, touched by the afflicted person/place, at a crossroads or in flowing water; other variations exist.
27. Introduction to the first volume of the *Punjab Notes and Queries* Vol. I, No. 1:October 1883 (PSA).
28. Note 19, Folklore Section. Vol. I, No. 1:October 1883:3 (PSA).
29. Ibid.
30. Note 354, Folklore Section. Vol. I, No. 4: January 1884:40 (PSA).
31. Note 355, Folklore Section. Vol. I, No. 4: January 1884:41 (PSA).
32. Note 446, Folklore Section. Vol. I, No. 5: February 1884:51 (PSA).
33. Note 448, Folklore Section. Vol. I, No. 5: February 1884:51 (PSA).
34. Note 530, Folklore Section. Vol. I, No. 6: March 1884:64 (PSA).
35. Note 531, Folklore Section. Vol. I, No. 5: March 1884:64 (PSA).

36. Note 930, Folklore Section. Vol. I, No. 11: August 1884:124 (PSA).
37. Note 597, Folklore Section. Vol. I, No. 7: April 1884:75 (PSA).
38. Note 596, Folklore Section. Vol. I, No. 7: April 1884:51 (PSA).
39. Chris Pinney informed me that in India there is a similar practice of *dhupdehra* for protection (pers. comm.).
40. Although Taylor (2002) explicates *drishti* similarly to *darshan*, exemplifying it by alluding to religious practice within film, he is more interested in its general application as an intense fixed gaze between subject/object that is replete with meanings.
41. See Tejaswini Ganti (2002).
42. Chromolithographs are not confined to Hindu worship—as Chris Pinney (1997, 2001) demonstrates, there are chromolithographs with Islamic iconography (see Farida Batool 2004 for a brief look at Shi'ite chromolithographs), as well as those referencing popular imagery within the spheres of politics, nationalism, and religion (Pinney 2004).
43. Pinney (2004:194).
44. 'Public culture' as formulated by Appadurai and Breckenridge (1988, 1995) offers a comparative discourse to Euro-American ideas of the public sphere and mass culture accounting for South Asia's particular experience of modernity in the late twentieth century, in which the local negotiates and engages with modernity at different cultural sites. For an insightful exposition of the theoretical basis and shortfalls of public culture, see Chris Pinney (2001b).
45. However, media representation concerns address a specific group or class; in relation to Hindi film, see Chris Pinney (2001b), who notes that recent film narratives cater for urban/small-town audiences of South Asia, ignoring the sensibilities of the rural majority.
46. Pinney uses 'potential common ground of action' (2001b:5) to describe the middle ground of possibilities while recognising the immense differences between communities.
47. Public culture at one level is concerned with the nation-state; however, transnational flows of media make national boundaries redundant, particularly when cultural unity is stronger than national ties—apparent in the popularity of Indian soap operas/films among the Pakistani public.
48. One discontent emerges from Appadurai and Breckenridge's (1992) empirically thin research on museum reception.
49. Eck (1981) uses the dualism of mythic imagination, and both genres are equally potent visual structures in many Hindi films; see Ashis Nandy (2001).
50. The hybrid form of modernity is represented in such Hindi films as *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* ('Something Is Happening'[1998], wherein

Tina [Rani Mukherjee] appears on the outside to be a mini-skirt clad college girl, but she can easily recite the religious prayer *Om Jai Jagdish Hare*).

51. Hooper-Greenhill (2000) identifies this as a hermeneutic process of meaning construction.
52. From Michael Ames (1992:112).
53. Part of visitor questionnaire/interviews.
54. Interview, April 26, 2005.
55. Interview, April 27, 2005.
56. Interview, August 1, 2003.
57. From visitor questionnaire/interviews.
58. I am aware that there are many public spaces where television/film can be consumed—for example, teashops, cafes, restaurants, and the cinema. However, these are either male dominated or class specific.
59. This first transmission, in black and white, was from a small pilot station in Lahore with television centres being later set up in Karachi, Rawalpindi/Islamabad (1967), and in Peshawar and Quetta (1974) (www.ptv.com.pk/introduction.asp, accessed February 9, 2012).
60. PTV's website states that the corporation is concerned with 'educat[ing] the people through wholesome entertainment . . . to inculcate in them a greater awareness of their own history, heritage, current problems and development as well as knowledge of the world at large' (www.ptv.com.pk/introduction.asp, accessed February 9, 2012).
61. Interview, July 9, 2003.
62. Many Pakistani soap operas portray lifestyle habits of the affluent upper and middle classes; *Mehndi* told the story of a businessman with four daughters and followed their married lives. Although the lifestyle depicted was modern, the moral of the story was based on traditional ideas of marriage and fate (*kismet*), to which all classes of audience could associate, culturally and emotionally.
63. This space is usually occupied by South Asians; so, despite being unfamiliar it is uncannily known. An example is the Pakistani soap opera *Tum Hi Toh Ho* ('You Are the One'[2003]), set in the United States of America, and such Hindi films as *Kal Ho Naa Ho* ('Tomorrow May, May Not Come'[2003]), set in New York.
64. Interview, July 8, 2003.
65. Before satellite television, news censorship could be bypassed by listening to the BBC World Service and, at least in Lahore, by watching the Indian channel *Doordarshan*, whose signal was picked by homes within the Amritsar transmitter's range.

66. Cable operators control channel variety and can include an array from Indian, American, and European channels: Discovery Channel, National Geographic, Zee TV, Star Plus, Star Sports, ESPN, Channel V, HBO, CNN, Fox News, BBC World, Canal + , Al Jazeera, Quranic Channel, or MTV, as well as some Russian, German, and Lebanese channels.
67. During political tensions with India, cable operators have been forced by the government to block certain Indian channels, much to the discontent of most viewers.
68. Interview, August 14, 2003.
69. Depiction of Punjabi or North Indian culture in Indian programmes and films offers points of cultural commonality.
70. Despite the use of more Sanskritised Hindi in Indian media following the onset of Hindutva politics, other than news channels/programmes that use *shuddh* ('pure') Hindi, most entertainment programmes and films rely on a mix of Hindi and Urdu—Hindustani, that is easily understood by Pakistanis but also many Indians, who themselves may struggle with 'higher' Hindi.
71. Interview, August 3, 2003.
72. See Rachel Dwyer (2000) for the case in India and Ian Talbot (1998) for Pakistan.
73. Similar to viewers of television serials in Kamgar Nagar, Goa, studied by Monteiro (1998).
74. Interview, July 30, 2003.
75. *Dramay* share the same melodramatic narrative structure, and increasingly film stars appear in them—such as Karishma Kapoor and Amrita Singh.
76. Cable operators air the latest Indian films from DVDs, including films that have just released in Indian cinemas.
77. Shops selling DVDs are present in small towns and villages and also rent out DVD players.
78. In the 1980s, video cassettes functioned similarly, and even during Zia-ul-Haq's virulent Islamic reforms Indian films were avidly consumed, including in Zia's household, and Indian actors such as Shatrughan Sinha attended his daughter's wedding (see Gazdar 1997). In 2008, Pakistani cinemas started showing Indian films again, but apart from a few cinemas in upper-/upper-middle-class localities, the rest are traditionally patronised by male audiences.
79. Images of new and old Indian film stars such as Kajol, Madhuri Dixit, Madhubala, Shah Rukh Khan, and Dilip Kumar are found on the back of wagons, on the walls of beauty parlours, and on advertising for local shops—and music from film is widely listened

to in homes and played in public places such as shops and teashops and at weddings, where people copy dance performances.

80. Mushtaq Gazdar (1997) gives a comprehensive history of Pakistani cinema.
81. Interview, August 14, 2003; recent exceptions include *Yeh Dil Apka Hua* (2002) ('*This Heart Is Yours*'), which included songs sung by Indian vocalist Kumar Sanu.
82. Interview, August 1, 2003.
83. Interview, September 14, 2003.
84. Interview, July 13, 2003.
85. Interview, September 14, 2003.
86. The melodramatic genre allows films to transcend national boundaries; see Brian Larkin (1997) for consumption of Indian films in Nigeria.
87. Ashis Nandy (2001) looks at the persisting genres of Indian cinema, where narratives negotiate tradition and modernity but always within the mythological.
88. *Devdas* is an adaptation of Saratchandra Chattopadhyay's (1917) novel and has been remade several times, but this most recent version, made on a budget of Rs. 500,000,000, was the first Bollywood film to be invited to Cannes. For an interesting psychological analysis of *Devdas*, see *The City as the Invitation to an Antique Death* (Nandy 2001:43–71).
89. In the original story, the city is Calcutta, but in the 2002 remake, this becomes London.
90. Again 'new' does not refer to something novel but evokes elements of innovation and hybridity, where the traditional is reinvented or mixed with a modern style, such as dance sequences combining classic Indian dancing with disco or ballroom styles.
91. Representations of natural beauty and abundance are popular among many Pakistanis, who decorate their houses with sceneries of generic Alpine hills or waterfalls as well as fruit and flowers, which can also form borders and frames for photographs (Pinney 1997). In wedding videos these images are mixed with basic video footage to send the couple on a journey through a dreamscape of gardens, lakes, or celestial heavens or to have them evolving from flowers. Scenic landscapes and film stars are also painted on the back of rickshaw panels reflecting the sentiments of the *rickshawala*.
92. It was unclear whether this was a real or fictional place.
93. Interview, October 30, 2002.
94. *Asoka* (2001); historical epic based on the life of the ancient Indian King Asoka (c. 299–237 B.C.E.), who ruled the Magadha Kingdom and the Mauryan Empire.

95. The current trend during my research, but could be replaced by any popular film or drama—for instance, *Mehndi* was appropriated as a henna design.
96. Street hawkers and vendors selling groceries, cloth, domestic utensils, and the like on small wooden carts (*rayris*) are mobile displays that supplement the bazaar.
97. The word *bazaar* in Lahore refers both to traditional commercial areas found in the Walled City, such as *Rang Mahal*, as well as neighbourhood markets and modern shopping complexes like Liberty Market in Gulberg.
98. See Timothy Mitchell (1988) and Saloni Mathur (2007) for recreations and living exhibits of the East at Exhibitions.
99. My questionnaire for museum visitors revealed that 90% of visitors regularly visited a bazaar.
100. Just across the Mall Road, Anarkali bazaar starts with second-hand books/magazines stalls and men's clothing.
101. Interview, July 13, 2004.
102. Interview, September 14, 2003.
103. Such categories not new; Zekiye Eglar (1960) records for the Mohla village, Gujarat District, that villagers classified goods into *desi* ('local') and *vilaeyti* ('foreign') based on increased communication/trade with such cities as Lahore and knowledge of foreign products.
104. Shopkeepers often bellow *China! China! China!* or *Imported hai, Korean! Sab log is ko pasand karain hain!* ('It is imported, from Korea! Everyone likes this one!') to attract customers.
105. Interview, August 1, 2003.
106. Interview, August 14, 2003.
107. Interview, July 30, 2003.
108. Pace was Lahore's first department store, owned by former Pakistani cricketer Imran Khan. Since then others have appeared, including Hang-Ten and Al-Fatah.
109. My questionnaire showed that 87% of visitors regularly frequented shopping plazas.
110. *Urs* also refers to 'wedding' or union between the saint (known as *wali* or friend of God) and God.
111. There are numerous saints' shrines in Lahore, including Mian Mir and Bibi Pak Daman, and across Pakistan—Imam Bari, Rawalpindi, and Baba Farid, Pakpattan.
112. Sufi mystics, or *pir*, played an important part in disseminating Islam in South Asia from the eighth century onward, and one of the two most revered Sufi shrines in Pakistan is of *Data Sahib*, Lahore (dating to the eleventh century), the other being

the twelfth-century shrine of Shabaz Qalander in Sehwan, Sindh Province. Syed Abul Hassan Bin Usman Bin Ali Al-Hajwari, popularly called *Data Sahib*, was a prominent scholar of Islam who wrote the first Persian-language treatise on Sufism—*Kashf-al-Mahjub* ('Revelation of the Veiled').

113. The shrine of *Data Sahib* has a daily attendance of 28,000–32,000 visitors, increasing to 55,000–58,000 on Thursdays and Fridays (Auqaf Department, Government of Punjab). The shrine was targeted by suicide bombers on July 1, 2010—the first time in Pakistan's current turmoil that a saint's shrine has been attacked.
114. A recent story often told to me recounted how a woman challenged *Data Sahib* for money to get her daughter married, then fell asleep in the courtyard and awoke to find the money next to her but gave it away—and the same thing happened a second time. She started to leave when an elderly man approached her and asked her what was going on; she described her experience, and the man replied: 'You were given money, but you gave it away twice.' Then he left. The woman suddenly realised that it was *Data Sahib* himself who had visited her. Witnesses validate the story, and so for believers is irrefutable.
115. Interview, July 30, 2003.
116. The shrine also forms the starting point for many political rallies. Shrines/*pir*/politics have an intertwined history that David Gilmartin (1988) examines in colonial Punjab.
117. Interview, August 1, 2003.
118. At the shrine of *Data Sahib*, the tomb is physically accessible to men; women view it from a partitioned area.
119. *Makhanay* are small white balls made of sugar.
120. Decorated *chaddaraen* ('cloth sheets') are offered to symbolise that a wish/prayer has been fulfilled, and thus they validate the saint's potency. Normally they are green in colour and covered in Qu'ranic verses that shimmer in the light owing to the glittery screen-printing.
121. Recitation of the *fatheya* ('creed of Islam') is obligatory when visiting any Muslim grave.
122. Food is also distributed at the shrines; some people bring cooked food while others pay for *degs* ('cauldrons') of food to be distributed by caterers near the shrine. The continual feeding of the poor at the shrine of *Data Sahib* for many is evidence of the saint's efficacious quality.
123. Similar to *prasad* in Hinduism; food, having had contact with the shrine or holy site, is distributed.
124. Interview, July 8, 2003.

- 125. Interview, September 15, 2003.
- 126. Interview, August 14, 2003.
- 127. Interview, September 14, 2003.
- 128. Interview, July 8, 2003.
- 129. Ayesha Ashfaq told me that she knew people who queue at the shrine of *Data Sahib* for the water from the *ghussal* to keep as sacred water.
- 130. I saw a group making its way toward the shrine of *Data Sahib*, where the participants, unaware of the traffic, were busy collecting money while being filmed by a video-maker.
- 131. Many famous *qaawal* perform(ed) at *Data Sahib*'s shrine during the *urs*, including Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.
- 132. Interview, September 15, 2003.
- 133. Interview, October 30, 2002.
- 134. Ghulam Sarwar, a 42-year-old steel engineer from Karachi, interviewed May 3, 2002.

EPILOGUE

- 1. Naeem, a 40-year-old, unemployed man from Behra, Sargodha District, Punjab; interviewed April 26, 2003.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Shaila Bhatti is an Honorary Research Associate at the Department of Anthropology, University College London, where she also gained her Ph.D. and has been an ESRC Postdoctoral Fellow.